

Jonas and Hethor as Koreans

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 17 Mar 1998

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Tony Ellis — 17 Mar 1998, 16:03

17/03/98

14:20

Jonas and Hethor as Koreans etc

It seems far from likely to me that either Jonas or Hethor are Korean.

C R Culver says that Jonas:

babbled in Korean in the
antechamber (Korean is a nasal, monosyllabic language. I am sure it was Korean
and not Chinese, because Severian does not speak of tones).

Jonas is a _robot_, remember. A robot assembled in Korea might babble in that language when delirious, it's true, but it seems far more likely to me that what Severian is hearing is some form of computer-speak. The vocal equivalent of 8086 machine code, if you like.

And of Kim Lee Soong:

the fact that they would remember that ancient name from our time
is staggering and improbable

It doesn't have to date back to "our time". Only a thousand years or so (maybe a lot less) before Ymar such names may still have been in use. If we can accept that the prison as an institution can have lasted that long, I can accept that one of its earliest prisoners has passed into prison folklore. (It's not as if they would have had much else to chat about over the centuries...)

Mantis wrote:

The text says that the prisoners (most but not all--don't forget Lomer and Nicarete) are descendents of crew of a starship that crashlanded on or near the House Absolute. They were looking for the Port but they couldn't find one at all.

I hate to use the C-word again, but where does it say this? Jonas tells us that _he_ crewed on a ship that crashed, certainly, but the prisoners seem to be there for far more mundane reasons.

"Jonas," an android sailor on the ship, was repaired with biological remnants of an Urth shepherd who was killed by the crash.

Mantis, where are you getting this stuff from?!?! :-) Android, yes. But shepherd? Jonas tell us "He was on the ground... We killed him by accident, coming in." Personally I've always assumed that he was talking about entering a sealed environment, and thus killing a human crew-member somehow. If you're suggesting that this person was actually in the path of the crashing ship, fair point, but in that case he could have been anybody: tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor. Why shepherd?

While I'm being baffled, where does this theory that Hethor is Kim Lee Soong come from? If Agia says Hethor isn't his real name that's good enough for me, but why should he be KLS?

You'll all thank me for being such a Doubting Thomas one day, you know. <g>