

I'm just wild about Saffron...they call me Mellow Yellow

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 27 Mar 1998

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Dan Parmenter — 27 Mar 1998, 10:57

From: m.driussi at genie.geis.com

The alcalde of Saltus also "wore his yellow gown of office and his gold chain" (II, ch. 4).

The Old Autarch wears the yellow robe and (in contrast to gold chain) an iron phallus necklace (containing, as it turns out, the autarchial alzado extract [which =is= said to be more powerful, I believe, than the Vodalarii version] and a skull smashing knife).

Master Gurloes gives Severian a memorable lecture about poisonous aphrodisiacs and an iron phallus (II, ch. 7).

One of the more disturbing parts of the book actually. Severian suggests that Gurloes rather enjoys the prospect of rape and even remarks that he could manage it without the powder or iron phallus in a crisis situation. Ugh.

And let's not forget the man-apes and their clubs.

Re: yellow and color symbolism:

The explanations from Buddhism are all good and I thank you. BTW I certainly didn't intend to suggest that the saffron robes were supposed to be a reference to Hare Krishnas. I simply used that as an obvious point of comparison.

From: "Alice Turner" <al at interport.net>

I lived in Bangkok for a time, and saw Buddhist monks in their saffron

yellow robes daily. In daily life, at least among English-speakers (and TBOTNS is written in English), the terms were used interchangeably.

It nonetheless strikes me as quite significant for Wolfe to mention the color as many times as he does and then to change the actual word at the very end. Perhaps to strengthen my argument regarding subtle inconsistencies I need stronger examples than this, but I think the question remains open.

From: C R Culver <CRCulver at aol.com>

1) Severian, after the adventure at the Castle of Baldanders, is basically friendless (his imagined Thecla doesn't count). He wonders north lonely. He comes up a soldier who has died. The soldier, let's call him pre-Miles, has died after some unfortunate mishap. So, Severian puts the Claw in his mouth, and his subconscious despair and loneliness manifest themselves, the Claw recreates the personality of Jonas in the soldier, who wakes up as Miles. It wasn't entirely successful, as Miles isn't much of a friend (barely talks, is aloof), although Severian tries to make one of him. Could this idea work?

Interestingly enough, when Severian and Miles compare notes at the lazaret, Miles says much the same about Severian, despite the fact that Severian was convinced that he was babbling away.

Dan

C R Culver — 27 Mar 1998, 21:29 · follows Dan Parmenter

Dan said:

One of the more disturbing parts of the book actually. Severian suggests that Gurloes rather enjoys the prospect of rape<

Yes, but Severian's main point in his collected memoirs is that all men are torturers at heart, and Gurloes fits in with this idea.

Christopher R. Culver <crculver at aol.com>