

Forgotten Names ... and Other Dangers

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 28 Mar 1998

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Charles Dye — 28 Mar 1998, 10:31

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

Subject: Urth's Unknown Names

Just been thinking lately about secret, forgotten, or just plain unknown names in the BotNS:

- 1) Hethor's real name
- 2) The real name of the town that forgot Fauna
- 3) Valeria's second husband (who *was* he? any ideas?)

This one, at least, we know. Dux Caesidius was one of Severian's military commanders during the Ascian War. He never appears in the texts, but we do know that he looks something like Severian himself.

"Dux" is, I believe, a Latin word meaning "leader," a cognate to "duke." The whole bit about Valeria's remarriage seems to be meant to suggest Claudius's betrayal by Valeria Messalina, but Severian's Valeria comes off as simply lonely, rather than nympho-bitch.

- 4) The names of the planets beside Urth, Verthandi, Skuld, and Dis.

Wasn't "Abbadon" Mercury? I believe this tidbit appears in Severian's Night on the Bald Mountain.

- 5) The names of the 17 Megatherians (doesn't really matter, though), or a single member of the Group of Seventeen

What makes you think that the G17 *have* names? The captured Ascian soldier in the lazaret has presumably had far less contact with Erebus, Abaia and Company. He's still human, more or less. But he has to make do with "Loyal to the Group of Seventeen" -- not much of a name, IMHO. I suspect that the actual components of that group will have even less individuality.

- 6) The previous Lictor of Thrax.
- 7) Cyriaca's husband.
- 8) The name of Dorcas' ("Cas") husband.
- 9) The Cumaeen's real name, if any.
- 10) The name (and purpose) of Baldanders' undine.

Oddly enough, one of the undines has essentially the same name as the lake where Baldanders's castle stands: Juturna = Diuturna, as "diurnal" became our "journal."

raster at highfiber.com