

# More on Juturna

The Urth list — 12 messages, 8 voices, 28 Apr 2006

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4576>

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Roy C. Lackey — 28 Apr 2006, 06:21

Pursuant to what I posted earlier this month: In the last paragraph of chapter 30 of CITADEL, the aquastor Malrubius said, ""No, we do not take you to the paramours of Abaia, those who spared and succored you because you had been a torturer and would be Autarch."

This reinforces what I said earlier, that the undines knew all along that Severian would be autarch. They knew it the same way the aquastor and the Hierodules knew it -- they had seen the future. There is no logical reason why the undines' (and therefore Abaia's) future knowledge should have stopped at that day in the throne room, and we know it went that far because Juturna was there that day. And we know she was still there after the Flood.

The quote suggests not only that Juturna saved his life (would save, from her perspective), but "spared" also suggests that she (or other undines) had/would have Severian in a position to kill him, but chose not to. That may or may not pertain to the drowning incident in the Gyll. But "succored" implies that they actually \*helped\* to further his career. Now, when would that have been (or would be)?

Among other things, all this suggests to me that Baldanders was never a contender for the throne. Both the Hierodules and the undines knew all along who would be autarch. Baldanders was nothing more than a curiosity. He also knew, when the Hierodules knelt to Severian at the castle, who would be autarch.

-Roy

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Chris — 28 Apr 2006, 08:06 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

If, as you say, there is no reason the undines' future knowledge doesn't extend to the flood, then it implies that Severian gave them what they wanted - otherwise if they knew he'd fail to deliver, they wouldn't have bothered to spare him.

So are you saying that Abaia really won in the end?

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Juturna was there that day. And we know she was still there after the Flood.

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-Roy

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**b sharp — 28 Apr 2006, 11:34 · follows Chris**

I think it is a mistake to assume the desires of Juturna are (in all times) the same as those of Abaia. Abaia is not interested in the physical domination of Urth but rather the acquisition of slaves. I suspect Abaia's harem of brides/daughters may not be happy with their roles but rather forced into compliance in some manner.

Some evidence for this exists in the quasi-Theseus story that Severian tells Jonas. If the naviscaput leviathan in that story is a reference to Abaia then could the Corn Maidens, taken against their will, be the analog to the undines?

Or perhaps even closer, for Juturna, would be the monster's daughter (can't remember her name). She helps the hero defeat the naviscaput because she is the product of her father raping her mother. Perhaps some of Juturna's actions in helping Severian can be seen in this light.

To me the undines (Juturna, Idas) project a sense of unhappy desperation in their direct dealings with Severian until the final scene where Juturna is happily munching on fish and seems calmly pleased to help Severian with no strings attached. Perhaps in some unexplained manner the New Sun has freed the undines.

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**David Duffy — 28 Apr 2006, 13:14 · in reply to b sharp**

On Fri, 28 Apr 2006, b sharp wrote:

Jonas. If the naviscaput leviathan in that story is a reference to Abaia then could the Corn Maidens, taken against their will, be the analog to the undines?

To me the undines (Juturna, Idas) project a sense of unhappy desperation in their direct dealings with Severian until the final scene where Juturna is happily munching on fish and seems calmly pleased to help Severian with no strings attached. Perhaps in some unexplained manner the New Sun has freed the undines.

This reminds one of the various female Aelf in Wizard-Knight.

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Roy C. Lackey — 28 Apr 2006, 18:20 · follows David Duffy

Chris wrote:

If, as you say, there is no reason the undines' future knowledge doesn't extend to the flood, then it implies that Severian gave them what they wanted - otherwise if they knew he'd fail to deliver, they wouldn't have bothered to spare him.

Maybe I worded it clumsily. I was saying that there is no reason the undines' future knowledge doesn't extend *\*past\** the flood, since, based on the fact that the Gyll drowning incident had yet to happen (for Juturna) on the day of the flood, she seemed to be living, or at least operating, contrary to the normal flow of time.

So are you saying that Abaia really won in the end?

I don't know about winning, but I'm not so sure he lost, either. Postdiluvian Juturna, at least, seemed to be getting along just fine. And, as I think Andrew pointed out, in the end Severian-the-Conciliator found himself a petty god in a pantheon of petty gods modeled on the autarch's court. That seems to me quite a come-down.

-Roy

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pthwndxrcclzp — 28 Apr 2006, 18:24 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

Don't know if anyone's mentioned this yet...but do Juturna & Co. necessarily have to possess the power to see the future themselves? What I mean is, couldn't someone or something else (cacogens, Abaia, etc.) have just *\*told\** various Undines pieces of the future? Why do we need to assume the undines have that ability themselves?

On 4/28/06, Roy C. Lackey <rclackey at stic.net> wrote:

Maybe I worded it clumsily. I was saying that there is no reason the undines' future knowledge doesn't extend *\*past\** the flood, since, based on the fact that the Gyll drowning incident had yet to happen (for Juturna) on the day of the flood, she seemed to be living, or at least operating, contrary to the normal flow of time.

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mournings glory — 28 Apr 2006, 18:24 · in reply to b sharp

From: b#

I think it is a mistake to assume the desires of Juturna are (in all times) the same as those of Abaia. Abaia is not interested in the physical domination of Urth but rather the acquisition of slaves. I suspect Abaia's harem of brides/daughters may not be happy with their roles but rather forced into compliance in some manner.

I've another theory yet -- could the undines be the equivalent of alien Mata Haris and therefore be agents of the Hierodules?

1) Their names (Juturna, Idas) seem closer in affinity to the friendlier extrasolarians of New Sun (Barbatus, Famulimus, Ossipago) than the teratonymic Megatherians (Abaia, Ariocho, Erebus).

2) Juturna, in Roman Mythology, is the goddess of springs, wells, and especially *\*fountains\** -- ergo, she's a symbol of rebirth as well as the White Fountain that will renew the old sun. (Note as well the common linkage with Roman mythology -- B, F, & O all being named after minor Roman deities.)

3) Either the undines experience time in "widdershins" fashion or they know how to access the Corridors of Time (depending on your preference) -- yet another link that posits a connection more between the Hierodules than the Megatherians. (Indeed, I see no evidence that the Megatherians -- being creatures of Briah and not Yesod -- can negotiate or undercut time in the same fashion. But if the undines know how, why wouldn't their alleged masters?)

4) Juturna consistently helps -- rather than hinders -- Sev in every encounter. (The attempted seduction scene at Cephissus appears designed to give our hero the ability to breathe underwater, which he'll need in the future.) Idas, on the hand, may have been turned by her father (if, that is, he's Baldanders -- we're still awaiting the paternity results <gr>).

5) The notion of sea-deep monsters needing brides, consorts, or sexual playthings implies one of the seven deadly sins -- lust --and opportunizes their vulnerability to the placement of covert operatives by the opposition  
--a catching of the Catodon, if you will.

em-as-in-merfrow (go Ariel!)

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Chris — 28 Apr 2006, 20:07 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

Roy said:

I don't know about winning, but I'm not so sure he lost, either.  
Postdiluvian Juturna, at least, seemed to be getting along just fine. And, as I think Andrew pointed out, in the end Severian-the-Conciliator found himself a petty god in a pantheon of petty gods modeled on the autarch's court. That seems to me quite a come-down.

Well, one could also take the approach - which is part of my interpretation of the books, but on other grounds - that the undines are actually more primordial than Abaia and the other Megatherians. The undines are always going to be there no matter what happens; Abaia & co., while of the same general order of beings, are the more complex product of accumulated human history that is all washed away with the flood.

By this light the mistake would be in assuming that the undines necessarily serve the interests of Abaia in all things, just because they are generally subordinate to him.

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Jeff Wilson — 29 Apr 2006, 05:23 · in reply to pthwndxrclzp

pthwndxrclzp wrote:  
Don't know if anyone's mentioned this yet...but do Juturna & Co.  
necessarily have to possess the power to see the future themselves? What I mean is, couldn't someone or something else (cacogens, Abaia, etc.) have just \*told\* various Undines pieces of the future? Why do we need to assume the undines have that ability themselves?

Because the undines \*demonstrate\* it, via

- 1) Juturna's non-linear personal experiences
- 2) Juturna's pointing out the time-ward directions of travel to Severian
- 3) Idas' presence on the time-travelling Ship.

Roy C. Lackey — 29 Apr 2006, 06:17 · follows Jeff Wilson

Aquastor wrote:

Don't know if anyone's mentioned this yet...but do Juturna & Co. necessarily have to possess the power to see the future themselves? What I mean is, couldn't someone or something else (cacogens, Abaia, etc.) have just \*told\* various Undines pieces of the future? Why do we need to assume the undines have that ability themselves?

Jeff answered your question, so, just because those flood waters had to have been muddy anyway, I should point out that Juturna is inconsistent. That is, though her stint as lifeguard in Severian's past was in her future that day in the throne room, when he next met her \*after\* the flood, when she was eating fish in the Citadel, he remarked, "You lived", referring to her having survived the throne room scene. She answered, "You did not." (URTH, 341) She meant, of course, that he had managed to get himself killed (yet again!) on that day, whether it was by the knife blade, the poison on it, or drowning.

My point here is that that day in the throne room was in the past for both of them.

-Roy

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 29 Apr 2006, 06:46 · in reply to pthwndxrcclzp

On 4/28/06, pthwndxrcclzp <aquastor at gmail.com> wrote:

.... oh, heck, this has nothing to do with what you wrote.

I just have to ask, pthwndxrcclzp: are you any relation to Mr Mxyzptlk?

--Dan'l

I do not fear Satan half so much as I fear those who fear him.  
-- St Teresa of Avila  
<http://www.livejournal.com/users/sturgeonslawyer>

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pthwndxrcclzp — 29 Apr 2006, 07:33 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Ha! Well, first of all, my apologies for not having read the books in too long a time, and my thanks to Jeff for the clarification(s) on the undines' temporal posture. As for your question, Dan'l, while I have the fondest of memories of the imp's mischief going as far back as comics read to me in the early 1960s, Alan Moore put paid to any deep affection for the character back in 1996. The reference is actually to Finnegan's

Wake<<http://www.trentu.ca/jjoyce/fw-284.htm>><sheepish, self-consciously pretentious grin>.

On 4/28/06, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:

On 4/28/06, pthwndxrcclzp <aquastor at gmail.com> wrote:

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