

Uncle Sev

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 02 Nov 2006

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4762>

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thalassocrat at nym.hush.com — 02 Nov 2006, 09:52

This has probably been kicked around long ago, but I couldn't find it on a quick archive scan. Anyway ...

Little Sev's first words to Our Sev after getting over the shock of seeing his mother & grandfather killed: "Are you my uncle?" (Sword, end of Ch 17.) Why would he ask that? One possibility: because he does in fact have an uncle named Severian, whom he has heard of but never met, and after whom he is named (presumably).

Our Sev says Casdoe named Little Sev. See Sword Ch. 24: "... so long as Jader lived, the boy his mother had named Severian could not truly perish." (Of course, we're probably supposed to reflect also that Our Sev has saved his soul or whatever by his healing of Jader, but that's surely a Wolfe-level thing, not Sev's own thinking.)

How would Our Sev know that it was Casdoe who named little Sev, rather than Becan, or Casdoe and Becan together? Is there some custom in the Commonwealth that mothers name children? Further, is it the custom that they name their children after relatives, perhaps more specifically an [eldest] child after one of their siblings?

Maybe we can hypothesize that Catherine named Our Sev after a brother of hers also called Sev. But where that would take you in the Sev Family Tree problem - I dunno! I guess it could fit with a disappointing scenario in which the Sev of the necropolis mausoleum had children named Sev jr and Catherine, and Cath (resurrected?) somehow (on a ship?) went forward in time to become Our Sev's mother. At least that accounts for the two empty coffins (resurrected Sev & resurrected Cath).

On another point: is there supposed to be a familial connection between Dorcas and Casdoe? It's so easy to see the names as syllabic transpositions of each other; "doe" and "gazelle" etc. And what would have Becan's pet name for Casdoe have been - "Cas" perhaps? I don't know what to do with that, either. But while spinning vague hypotheses, I also note that Dorcas is surprisingly good at painting stage scenery, and that she reminds me a bit of the woman Fechin trysted with, in the description of Becan's father: "... truly beautiful, in the way that the quietest sometimes are".