

bsharp's Inire theory

The Urth list — 23 messages, 6 voices, 07 Jul 2008

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5091>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

b sharp — 07 Jul 2008, 03:10

And where is it writ that Inire is a member of T's race?

I think Severian identifies Inire and the Cumaeen as hierodules to B, F and O and gets no argument. Does that count?

Jeff Wilson writes:

Suppose I am Inire, and too busy doing transcendent things to date. How does it help me quench my desire for a young lady's company to bud off a boatman who departs, perhaps to reunite in 50 or so years, perhaps not, especially when I am already in close cahoots with the owner of a youth-oriented clone bordello? Surely he could keep a really young one on hand, perhaps in return for a new section of the Botanical Gardens for he and his bees to enjoy?

That is SO unromantic! A guy is supposed to replace several lifetimes of true love with a string of prostitutes? ;-)

Anyway, I wouldn't think the budding off of a boatman (of course he wasn't necessarily a boatman then) was for the purpose of meeting Dorcas. Probably the opposite, she was an accident and a distraction.

I'll note that my version of this theory relies on the idea that Wolfe patterned the superhumans inhabiting Urth on the pre-Christian gods and monsters we find in ancient mythology. I glean from interviews that Wolfe likes the idea that ancient gods and monsters were not just baseless fantasies but representations of real beings back then.

And the Bible seems to provide a suggestion that there were supernatural beings who could change their form, present themselves as false gods and mate with humans, corrupting our race- these being fallen angels or demons- superhuman offshoots of God who diverted from his purpose. Similar to what some of the cacogens of Urth were doing, I think.

-bsharp

Jeff Wilson — 07 Jul 2008, 03:28 · in reply to b sharp

b sharp wrote:

And where is it writ that Inire is a member of T's race?

I think Severian identifies Inire and the Cumaeen as hierodules to B, F and O and gets no argument. Does that count?

Since Tzadkiel is a Hierogrammate rather than a Hierodule, no it doesn't count.

Jeff Wilson writes:

Suppose I am Inire, and too busy doing transcendent things to date. How does it help me quench my desire for a young lady's company to bud off a boatman who departs, perhaps to reunite in 50 or so years, perhaps not, especially when I am already in close cahoots with the owner of a youth-oriented clone bordello? Surely he could keep a really young one on hand, perhaps in return for a new section of the Botanical Gardens for he and his bees to enjoy?

That is SO unromantic! A guy is supposed to replace several lifetimes of true love with a string of prostitutes? ;-)

What kind of true love is he getting by lying about his species, or by trying to impress pre-pubescent Chatelaines? You've repeatedly painted him as a xenopedophile.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

b sharp — 07 Jul 2008, 14:10 · follows Jeff Wilson

Jeff Wilson says in response to the suggestion that Hierodules are of the race of Hierogrammates:

...no it doesn't count.

Where DO hierodules come from? The larvae of Tzadkiel would seem to be involved in sexual reproduction. Tzadkiel herself engages in asexual budding and compares the process to that of Porifera sponges which reproduce both sexually and asexually. Are hierodules completely separate from these processes? I think they say a couple times they don't serve Tzadkiel but rather the Increate directly so perhaps that is the case.

Regarding Inire's love life Jeff says:

What kind of true love is he getting by lying about his species, or by trying to impress pre-pubescent Chatelaines? You've repeatedly painted him as a xenopedophile.

Cheeky chap! Fancy judging the gods' morality by contemporary Western standards. The legends seem to portray a range of devotion levels between gods and mortals. Some are true and sincere such as Cupid and Psyche or Diana and Camilla. Others are midrange like Aphrodite and Adonis or Apollo and Hecuba. Then we have Zeus who appears to have been the Bill Clinton of Mount Olympus, seducing or raping a long line of human females (I think Europa was 12) in the guise of a bull, a swan, a golden shower of light etc... And (shades of Typhon) there were even a few pretty boys in the mix. But Bill does truly love Dorc...um, Hillary, yes?

-bsharp

Dave Tallman — 07 Jul 2008, 21:10 · follows b sharp

b sharp wrote:

Where DO hierodules come from? The larvae of Tzadkiel would seem to be involved in sexual reproduction. Tzadkiel herself engages in asexual budding and compares the process to that of Porifera sponges which reproduce both sexually and asexually. Are hierodules completely separate from these processes? I think they say a couple times they don't serve Tzadkiel but rather the Increate directly so perhaps that is the case.

Sev says in Citadel XXXIV:

"...they (the Hierogrammates) look both forward and back, and in so looking they have discovered us.... The Hierodules they have found too, and formed more quickly, to serve them in this universe. On their instructions, the Hierodules construct such ships as the one that bore me from the jungle to the sea, so that aquastors like Malrubius and Triskele may serve them

also."

Humans have been found, and are to be formed into Hieros. Hierodules seem to be another species that was found and "formed more quickly" into usable entities by the Hierogrammates. It doesn't look to me like Hierodules are budded-off like little Tzadkiel or a larval form like Apheta.

The business of the Hierodules constructing ships under the command of the Hierogrammates contrasts with what Father Inire says of his own ship problems in his letter in Citadel XXXV. He says: "You will perhaps consider the ship I summoned to aid my master, the autarch of his day, inadequate -- as for that matter do I -- yet it was the best I could obtain, and I was hard-pressed to get it. I myself have been forced to travel south otherwise, and much more slowly; the time may come soon when my cousins are ready to side not just with humankind but with *us* -- but for the present they persist in viewing Urth as somewhat less significant than many of the colonized worlds..."

I take "the ship I summoned" to be the birdlike aliens who attempt to rescue the Autarch and Sev from the Ascians at the end of Citadel XXV. They fail, and the two are carried off by Agia and Hethor instead. It seems these alien "cousins" don't have the Hierogrammate point-of-view about the importance of Urth. If Inire were a Hierogrammate (or even a high-ranking Hierodule) then he should be able to do better than this. He could be lying, but making lying excuses doesn't seem like a good way to win the confidence of the new autarch.

Still, Inire is of a "short-lived race" (Citadel XXXVIII), and the B,F,O Hierodules are said to live "a score of years, like dogs" (Sword XXXIII). There has to be a connection. Probably both are creations of the Hierogrammates from the same original life-forms. Their shorter lifespans may have made it easier to accelerate their evolution. Multiple types of Hierodules seem to have been made, with different roles.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2008, 21:23 · in reply to Dave Tallman

Let's try to make this as simple as possible...

Hierogrammates (whom some here call simply "Hieros") are the human race of the previous cycle of the Universe, or their descendants.

Hierodules are beings of the same cycle as Severian, bred up to help in the task of raising Humanity to Hiero-status.

Their relationship is something like that of the Overlords to the Overmind in Clarke's Childhood's End.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes, writer, trainer, bon vivant

<http://www.livejournal.com/users/sturgeonslawyer>

<http://www.danehyoakes.com>

I once absend-mindedly ordered Three Mile Island dressing in a restaurant and, with great presence of mind, they brought Thousand Island Dressing and a bottle of chili sauce. -- T. Pratchett

Roy C. Lackey — 08 Jul 2008, 03:40 · follows Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

Dave Tallman wrote:

The business of the Hierodules constructing ships under the command of the Hierogrammates contrasts with what Father Inire says of his own ship

problems in his letter in Citadel XXXV. He says: "You will perhaps consider the ship I summoned to aid my master, the autarch of his day, inadequate -- as for that matter do I -- yet it was the best I could obtain, and I was hard-pressed to get it. I myself have been forced to travel south otherwise, and much more slowly; the time may come soon when my cousins are ready to side not just with humankind but with *us* -- but for the present they persist in viewing Urth as somewhat less significant than many of the colonized worlds..."

I take "the ship I summoned" to be the birdlike aliens who attempt to rescue the Autarch and Sev from the Ascians at the end of Citadel XXV. They fail, and the two are carried off by Agia and Hethor instead.

The *ship* Inire summoned was the Hierodule ship that carried Malrubius and Triskele, and eventually carried Sev from the jungle to the ocean. Inire had no way of knowing that the Old Autarch's flier had been shot down. The Old Autarch had sent out a message after the crash to Vodalus, and the message was received. Vodalus sent the pteriopes under the command of Agia and Hethor. They rescued the autarch and Sev from the Ascian evzones. Agia to Sev: "and in the end you will come into my hands again, as you did when our pteriopes took you from the evzones." (CITADEL, XXX)

Inire was the jungle shaman who was trying to help the Old Autarch. When Agia and the Green Man arrived at the tent, they didn't know the Old Autarch was dead inside, and they worked together only after they arrived. Agia was already at the jungle camp and the Green Man got there by way of the Corridors, as did the Hierodule ship. As the Green Man said, "However, you ought to know that I was not alone: There are others questing there -- I shall send two of them to you." (ibid.) This was more than a week after the flier was shot down.

It seems these alien "cousins" don't have the Hierogrammate point-of-view about the importance of Urth. If Inire were a Hierogrammate (or even a high-ranking Hierodule) then he should be able to do better than this. He could be lying, but making lying excuses doesn't seem like a good way to win the confidence of the new autarch.

Still, Inire is of a "short-lived race" (Citadel XXXVIII), and the B,F,O Hierodules are said to live "a score of years, like dogs" (Sword XXXIII). There has to be a connection. Probably both are creations of the Hierogrammates from the same original life-forms. Their shorter lifespans may have made it easier to accelerate their evolution. Multiple types of Hierodules seem to have been made, with different roles.

Immediately before reading the letter, Sev spoke to Rudesind of Inire: "We know your master is what the people call a cacogen, and that for whatever reason, he is one of those few who have chosen to cast their lots entirely with humanity, remaining on Urth as a human being. The Cumaeen is another such, though perhaps you did not know that."

Fuel for the fire. Obviously, Inire is an alien of some sort, not a human being. But he is capable of taking on the form of one.

-Roy

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

Dave Tallman wrote:

Still, Inire is of a "short-lived race" (Citadel XXXVIII), and the B,F,O Hierodules are said to live "a score of years, like dogs" (Sword XXXIII). There has to be a connection. Probably both are creations of the Hierogrammates from the same original life-forms. Their shorter lifespans may have made it easier to accelerate their evolution. Multiple types of Hierodules seem to have been made, with different roles.

It seems like a stretch for Inire to serve the Autarchs for a thousand years when he only lives for 20 himself, even using time travel to skip over the boring parts but still create the Second House and the Botanical Gardens.

Immediately before reading the letter, Sev spoke to Rudesind of Inire: "We know your master is what the people call a cacogen, and that for whatever reason, he is one of those few who have chosen to cast their lots entirely with humanity, remaining on Urth as a human being. The Cumaeon is another such, though perhaps you did not know that."

Fuel for the fire. Obviously, Inire is an alien of some sort, not a human being. But he is capable of taking on the form of one.

Don't the heirodules already have humanlike faces, under their "scary alien" masks? I don't see Inire as a shapeshifter so much as an actor, he puts on a hood and robe to hide his nonhuman proportions and carries a walking stick for support in Urth's gravity and passes as a wizened old man. Urthers see the hood, the robe, a few sparkly doodads of vague function, hear the archaic speech he learnt from colonials long departed, and call him "Father Inire" on the assumption he's a priest; he doesn't deny this as he is most certainly a servant of the higher powers in heaven/Yesod.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

Dave Tallman — 08 Jul 2008, 04:46 · in reply to Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote:

Let's try to make this as simple as possible...

As Einstein once said, "Make things as simple as possible, but not simpler."

Hierogrammates (whom some here call simply "Hieros") are the human race of the previous cycle of the Universe, or their descendants.

I've made this mistake myself, but Hieros and Hierogrammates are not the same. Hieros were human-congates of the last universe cycle who formed the Hierogrammates from another race of beings, making them better than humans. The Hierogrammates plan to use the humans of Briah to form the next iteration of Hieros.

Hierodules are beings of the same cycle as Severian, bred up to help in the task of raising Humanity to Hiero-status.

Their relationship is something like that of the Overlords to the Overmind in Clarke's *_Childhood's End_*.

"Childhood's End" is an interesting reference. I wonder if BotNS was partly inspired by it, because it also involves an attempt to raise humanity to the next level which is catastrophic to Earth.

Roy C. Lackey — 08 Jul 2008, 05:09 · follows Dave Tallman

Jeff Wilson quoted and wrote:

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

Dave Tallman wrote:

Still, Inire is of a "short-lived race" (Citadel XXXVIII), and the B,F,O Hierodules are said to live "a score of years, like dogs" (Sword XXXIII).

There has to be a connection. Probably both are creations of the Hierogrammates from the same original life-forms. Their shorter lifespans may have made it easier to accelerate their evolution. Multiple types of Hierodules seem to have been made, with different roles.

It seems like a stretch for Inire to serve the Autarchs for a thousand years when he only lives for 20 himself, even using time travel to skip over the boring parts but still create the Second House and the Botanical Gardens.

Nevertheless, the line Dave referenced reads: "[...]old Father Inire, alive so long beyond the span of his short-lived kind[...]". Whatever the explanation, that's the way it was, and that's what we have to work with.

Immediately before reading the letter, Sev spoke to Rudesind of Inire:

"We

know your master is what the people call a cacogen, and that for whatever reason, he is one of those few who have chosen to cast their lots entirely with humanity, remaining on Urth as a human being. The Cumaeen is another such, though perhaps you did not know that."

Fuel for the fire. Obviously, Inire is an alien of some sort, not a human being. But he is capable of taking on the form of one.

Don't the heirodules already have humanlike faces, under their "scary alien" masks?

Barbatus and Famulimus do. After taking Sev to their cabin on the Ship they removed their masks:

"Famulimus's falsely human face was gone, revealing some huge-eyed horror with needle teeth; she pulled that away as well, and I saw (for one last time, as I then believed) the beauty of a goddess not born of woman." (URTH, V, 35)

Barbatus is described as "handsome, inhuman".

I don't see Inire as a shapeshifter so much as an actor, he puts on a hood and robe to hide his nonhuman proportions and carries a walking stick for support in Urth's gravity and passes as a wizened old man. Urthers see the hood, the robe, a few sparkly doodads of vague function, hear the archaic speech he learnt from colonials long departed, and call him "Father Inire" on the assumption he's a priest; he doesn't deny this as he is most certainly a servant of the higher powers in heaven/Yesod.

A "holy slave" need not be restricted to only one race of beings.

-Roy

Dave Tallman wrote:

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote:

Let's try to make this as simple as possible...

As Einstein once said, "Make things as simple as possible, but not simpler."

Hierogrammates (whom some here call simply "Hieros") are the human race of the previous cycle of the Universe, or their descendants.

I've made this mistake myself, but Hieros and Hierogrammates are not the same. Hieros were human-congates of the last universe cycle who formed the Hierogrammates from another race of beings, making them better than humans. The Hierogrammates plan to use the humans of Briah to form the next iteration of Hieros.

Hierodules are beings of the same cycle as Severian, bred up to help in the task of raising Humanity to Hiero-status.

Their relationship is something like that of the Overlords to the Overmind in Clarke's *_Childhood's End_*.

"Childhood's End" is an interesting reference. I wonder if BotNS was partly inspired by it, because it also involves an attempt to raise humanity to the next level which is catastrophic to Earth.

There's no "attempt," the transcendence is a natural process. The Overlords intercede only to prevent the human race from destroying itself before the transformation can be completed.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

b sharp — 08 Jul 2008, 12:42 · follows Jeff Wilson

I think Roy makes some good arguments that the summoned ship is Malrubius' and Triskele's. At least that is a ship rather than a creature or open top flyer. My concern is that if it was summoned for the old Autarch, Malrubius and Triskele shouldn't be there. It seems clear aquastors are assigned to one person and can only be seen/heard by that person. Would Appian see his aquastor, Paeon, flying the ship?

Roy notes:

A "holy slave" need not be restricted to only one race of beings.

True, but I can't help but think Inire and the Cumaeen are fundamentally different than Famulimus and Barbatus.

The latter are so tall, so graceful so beautiful. They are short-lived. They wear a couple uncomfortable masks and are careful to work only tangentially with the human race. Their true nature seems above human.

The former seem old and ugly. They live a very long time. They don't wear masks and are capable of shape changing and they interact directly with the human race. Their true nature seems animalistic.

When Severian says: "know your master is what the people call a cacogen, and that for whatever reason, he is one of those few who have chosen to cast their lots entirely with humanity, remaining on Urth as a human being. The Cumaeen is another such.."

I assign a lot of meaning to the disclaimer, "for whatever reason". I don't see these two working for the New Sun. I think they have developed some bad habits. Inire his exo-pedophilia I think Jeff calls it? And the Cumaean trying to raise the dead and collecting souls, represented by the faces Severian sees on her snake-like body. (Dave Tallman do you really see The Cumaean as a kindly old woman in contrast to Mme. Prisca?)

Barbatus and Famulimus clearly eschew the debauchery of these two, remaining above it. I think if Inire and the Cumaean are of the race of angels they have clearly fallen (the play does happen to have two demons). Maybe broke they broke the other Edenic taboo and ate from the Tree of Life? While perhaps these two are not "evil" (Ava warns us against the dichotomy) I think maybe they corrupted the human race necessitating a cleansing. Surely neither Inire or the Cumaean survives on Ushas.

Perhaps Severian is successful in Yesod because unlike previous autarchs he is able to transcend the stagnating influences these two have been perpetrating: war, incest, witchcraft, alzabo-type soul collecting etc.

The i'm Talkathon. Can 30-days of conversation change the world?
http://www.imtalkathon.com/?source=EML_WLH_Talkathon_ChangeWorld

Jeff Wilson — 08 Jul 2008, 17:00 · in reply to b sharp

b sharp wrote:

The former seem old and ugly. They live a very long time. They don't wear masks and are capable of shape changing and they interact directly with the human race. Their true nature seems animalistic.

Can you point out the shape-changing incidents for Inire and the Cumaean?

Jeff Wilson - [jwilson at io.com](mailto:jwilson@io.com)
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

b sharp — 08 Jul 2008, 18:26 · follows Jeff Wilson

Jeff Wilson asks:

Can you point out the shape-changing incidents for Inire and the Cumaean?

Depends. What is the purpose of your question? If you are asking for obvious, clear text descriptions I suppose it is obvious there isn't much of that. Was that the point you wanted to make?

I'd say the closest we get is the old woman Cumaean revealed to be in an endless snake form on the roof in the Stone Town (Uroburos? Hildegren says she is on the other side of the world from Nessus, perhaps she wraps all the way around the world?)

Roy offered a Severian quote a few posts back that implies a similar human/ non-human shape shifting ability for Father Inire. Aside from the various human characters I suspect Inire is playing, I suspect he is also the baboon who checks on Severian in the hospital after the avern fight and the uakari who looks like a little old man watching Severian after his House Absolute visit. (well, all uakaris do look that way, plus they have Fechin-like red hair:
<http://images.google.com/images?hl=en&q=uakari&gbv=2>)

The Cumaean might be some of the snakes peeking at Severian on his trip here

and there but from the secret knowledge (raising the dead?) he hopes to glean in the Ziggurat working with Severian's blood, I wonder if the Old Leech is another version of her. I tend to think the roof seance in the Stone Town was more about experimenting with Severian than Apu Punchau. If she is the provider of alzabo fluid to Vodalus and if she is also Ceryx then she has mastered a number of ways to raise the dead, none of them very nice, like Severian's power, which she might deeply covet.

-bsharp

The i'm Talkathon. Can 30-days of conversation change the world?
http://www.imtalkathon.com/?source=EML_WLH_Talkathon_ChangeWorld

Roy C. Lackey — 08 Jul 2008, 20:00 · follows b sharp

bsharp wrote:

I think Roy makes some good arguments that the summoned ship is Malrubius'

and Triskele's. At least that is a ship rather than a creature or open top flyer. My concern is that if it was summoned for the old Autarch, Malrubius and Triskele shouldn't be there.<<

Inire's letter said he summoned a ship to aid his former master, the Old Autarch. The Hierodule ship is the *only* ship of any kind in the jungle after the flier was shot down. While the group was on the march, Sev saw the old shaman (Inire) sneak into the mortally injured autarch's palanquin. That's why he told Rudesind "We even know that your master was with us in the jungles of the north, where he tried until it was too late to rescue my predecessor." The Hierodules were slow to respond with a rescue ship, probably because they wanted Sev to become autarch. With the Old Autarch dead and Sev then autarch, the plans changed. They sent Malrubius and Triskele to sway Sev and carry him from harm's way.

I assign a lot of meaning to the disclaimer, "for whatever reason". I don't see these two working for the New Sun. I think they have developed some bad habits. Inire his exo-pedophilia I think Jeff calls it? And the Cumaean trying to raise the dead and collecting souls, represented by the faces Severian sees on her snake-like body.<<

There is absolutely no way I can fit that idea into what I thought was your basic theory about Inire.

-Roy

Jeff Wilson — 08 Jul 2008, 21:54 · in reply to b sharp

Jeff Wilson asks:

Can you point out the shape-changing incidents for Inire and the Cumaean?

Depends. What is the purpose of your question? If you are asking for obvious,

clear text descriptions I suppose it is obvious there isn't much of that.

Was that

the point you wanted to make?

Dare I ask for something that indicates they are shapeshifters, regardless of the point being made? Y'know, objectively?

Jeff

Dave Tallman — 08 Jul 2008, 22:10 · follows Jeff Wilson

b sharp wrote:

(Dave Tallman do you really see The Cumaean as a kindly old woman in contrast to Mme. Prisca?)

The Cumaean seems quite compassionate -- she nursed Jolenta, a stranger she had no reason to help. I don't know if the face patterns on her snake-skin represent stolen souls -- all of them are rapt in contemplation, so they may just be aspects of her mystical nature.

Prisca is known to be very cruel, not just for the trick she played on Sev but also the fact that Ymar kicked women out of the guild for going beyond the punishments mandated by law. That must have been based on what Ymar saw Prisca doing, as well as any other women who followed her lead.

But the main reason I don't like the Cumaean/Prisca theory is that the Cumaean is highly mystically aware. She seems to be able to read minds and foretell the future. As Myrrn says in Sev's dream, dreams allow visions outside of time, and the Cumaean never wakes. Allowing Sev an opening for an attack at close range was really dumb -- showing a lack of awareness of his capabilities. Please don't say that this was a faked death scene, staged so that the Conciliator could have another miracle. We have too many theories where it's all a show for Sev, to the point where his life is almost like solipsism.

Barbatus and Famulimus clearly eschew the debauchery of these two, remaining

above it. I think if Inire and the Cumaean are of the race of angels they have clearly fallen (the play does happen to have two demons). Maybe broke they broke the other Edenic taboo and ate from the Tree of Life? While perhaps these two are not "evil" (Ava warns us against the dichotomy) I think maybe they corrupted the human race necessitating a cleansing. Surely neither Inire or the Cumaean survives on Ushas

There's definitely a competition for resources among the Hierodules, if Inire is telling the truth about how difficult it was to get the ship. Inire seems more invested in the success of the Commonwealth, where A,B, and O stay above it (just as they stay out of the fight between Baldanders and the lake men). Perhaps Inire is letting Sev know that just because he has connections to powerful aliens does not mean they will lend him much aid in fighting his wars. They have a bigger picture in mind.

b sharp — 09 Jul 2008, 11:57 · follows Dave Tallman

Jeff Wilson asks:

Dare I ask for something that indicates they are shapeshifters, regardless of the point being made? Y'know, objectively?

I think there may be a difference in interpretation. I've noted before I tend to interpret the story more from an artistic perspective than scientific. Because art has a Creator, the process ends up being closer to theologic. Since Wolfe is a man of science I think it is certainly useful to make hypotheses and scour for objective evidence which makes logical sense within a scientific model. But I find that approach to be incomplete without also relying on intuition, allusion and inference, where parables and dreams are just as important as events in the "real" world. in trying to divine the Creator's intention.

I am willing to consider shape shifting as an explanation for wtf is going on underneath this story. Shape shifters are prominent in 5HoC (as is cloning and the resulting identity issues from

these two processes) and I sense a connection between that story and this one. Shapeshifters are found in some of the stories within this story and in some of the dream sequences. I see those as important hints to what is going on in the main story but if others don't I'm not insisting they are wrong and I am right.

Jeff I am a bit unclear if you are being serious or specious on your mentions that you think Juturna is Severian's sister. I can see some evidence she is a family member but what are the reasons you are thinking sister?

John Smith — 09 Jul 2008, 12:41 · in reply to b sharp

I don't even see why Juturna is related at all to Severian. Is Juturna human? Can someone enlighten me?

Jack

--- b sharp <bsharporflat at hotmail.com> wrote:

Jeff Wilson asks:

Dare I ask for something that indicates they are shapeshifters, regardless of the point being made? Y'know, objectively?

I think there may be a difference in interpretation. I've noted before I tend to interpret the story more from an artistic perspective than scientific. Because art has a Creator, the process ends up being closer to theologic. Since Wolfe is a man of science I think it is certainly useful to make hypotheses and scour for objective evidence which makes logical sense within a scientific model. But I find that approach to be incomplete without also relying on intuition, allusion and inference, where parables and dreams are just as important as events in the "real" world. in trying to divine the Creator's intention.

I am willing to consider shape shifting as an explanation for wtf is going on underneath this story. Shape shifters are prominent in 5HoC (as is cloning and the resulting identity issues from these two processes) and I sense a connection between that story and this one. Shapeshifters are found in some of the stories within this story and in some of the dream sequences. I see those as important hints to what is going on in the main story but if others don't I'm not insisting they are wrong and I am right.

Jeff I am a bit unclear if you are being serious or specious on your mentions that you think Juturna is Severian's sister. I can see some evidence she is a family member but what

are the reasons you are thinking sister?

Jeff Wilson — 09 Jul 2008, 19:09 · in reply to b sharp

b sharp wrote:

Jeff Wilson asks:

Dare I ask for something that indicates they are shapeshifters, regardless of the point being made? Y'know, objectively?

I think there may be a difference in interpretation. I've noted before I tend to interpret the story more from an artistic perspective than scientific.

It doesn't have to be scientific evidence, just textual evidence.

Jeff I am a bit unclear if you are being serious or specious on your mentions that you think Juturna is Severian's sister. I can see some evidence she is a family member but what are the reasons you are thinking sister?

I'm serious in thinking she is a contender for sister, and I am serious that she is a candidate for shapeshifting dopplegangerhood, more so than Inire.

I'm still assembling my case, but to summarize:

- Undine-hood accounts for any differences in coloring and height
- sibling relationship explains J's inconsistent behavior as conflicting loyalty to Abaia and to brother
- J doesn't just save Sev from drowning, but apparently passes on water-breathing gift, effectively saving him from **ever** drowning and explains how he is able to spend hours or days underwater late in URTH even when he has lost his mojo
- Merryr is a stunted, land-raised changeling

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com

< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

Jeff Wilson — 09 Jul 2008, 19:15 · in reply to John Smith

John Smith wrote:

I don't even see why Juturna is related at all to Severian. Is Juturna human? Can someone enlighten me?

Baldanders demonstrates humans can become enormous water-breathers. Juturna was likely turned at a very young age, and being from the land herself is better at manipulating air-breathers than the average bear.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com

< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

Roy C. Lackey — 09 Jul 2008, 23:58 · follows Jeff Wilson

bsharp quoted and wrote:

A "holy slave" need not be restricted to only one race of beings.

True, but I can't help but think Inire and the Cumaeen are fundamentally different than Famulimus and Barbatus.

The latter are so tall, so graceful so beautiful. They are short-lived.

They wear a couple uncomfortable masks and are careful to work only tangentially with the human race. Their true nature seems above human.

The former seem old and ugly. They live a very long time. They don't wear masks and are capable of shape changing and they interact directly with the human race. Their true nature seems animalistic.<<

I find this hard to square with the exchange Sev had with B,F & O in Apu's tomb.

"... the Cumaeen, she was a Hierodule, like you. Father Inire told me.' Famulimus and Barbatus nodded."

Sev had already brought the New Sun and Ushas was a reality back in the future Sev had fled from to the past, and B, F & O knew that; they said so. Why would they acknowledge that the Cumaeen was a Hierodule at that stage of the game, but not point out that she had been some sort of corrupted agent of the cause? The game was over.

A holy slave serves the Increate, not the Hierogrammates or humanity.

You go on to say:

Barbatus and Famulimus clearly eschew the debauchery of these two, remaining

above it. I think if Inire and the Cumaeen are of the race of angels they have clearly fallen (the play does happen to have two demons). Maybe broke they broke the other Edenic taboo and ate from the Tree of Life? While perhaps these two are not "evil" (Ava warns us against the dichotomy) I think maybe they corrupted the human race necessitating a cleansing. Surely neither Inire or the Cumaeen survives on Ushas.<<

If they didn't survive on Ushas, nothing that B, F & O said to Sev in the distant past could change the fact of Ushas. Why not disabuse him of false notions?

The human race had been corrupted, in the biblical sense, long, long before the Cumaeen and Inire arrived on the scene. And the sins of the First Empire were ancient history, even in Typhon's time. No matter who was responsible for the black hole or when it was put in the sun, it was there and required a white hole to fix it. The campaign to repair the black hole in Urth's sun began at the tail-end of Typhon's reign, with the establishment of the Conciliator religion.

Even if you posit some sort of fallen-angel/demonic contamination of the human race by sex-crazed non-humans of any stripe, I don't see that it has any meaningful relevance. I don't see that lust, with or without incest, has anything to do with a black hole in the sun, which is what would lead to the "do nothing" future, the future of ice. I know of no evidence to suggest that Inire was on Urth before Ymar's reign. At most, any hypothetical sexual monkey business delayed the coming of the New Sun by a thousand years or so. Given the Hierogrammates had all the time in the universe(s), that's no big deal from their viewpoint, or the Increate's.

-Roy

b sharp — 10 Jul 2008, 12:04 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Roy C. Lackey quotes:

"... the Cumaeen, she was a Hierodule, like you. Father Inire told me.' Famulimus and Barbatus nodded."

Roy wonders why they don't tell Severian more details. I would say that, as demonstrated with Baldanders, they are prone to divulge a bare minimum of information. Only what is needed. Perhaps the nod is only to acknowledge "yes, that's what Father Inire told you".

Either way I don't see how this addresses my observation that Famulimus and Barbatus unveiled are super-humanly beautiful while The Cumaean unveiled is a weird snake-being and I see no evidence that Father Inire is beautiful under his cowl.

But I'm glad Roy brought the quote to attention. I hadn't noticed the word "was" before. Why the past tense? Was she formerly a hierodule but became something else? Or is that just an imprecise way for Severian to say he hadn't seen her for a while?

Where do The Cumaean and more importantly Father Inire go during the events of UotNS? Has Wolfe casually dismissed them as too unimportant to explain? Severian figures Father Inire won't long survive the old sun's passing, but why? He lasted 1000 years (most of which Severian remembers) why couldn't he hold out for another 60 years?

My own answer is literary/religious. I think those two plus Abaia and Erebus etc. go to the same place Zeus and Hera etc. go after the time of Jesus. But if anyone has other ideas about them, I am interested.

-bsharp

_____ The i'm Talkaton. Can 30-days of conversation change the world?
http://www.imtalkathon.com/?source=EML_WLH_Talkathon_ChangeWorld

Jeff Wilson — 10 Jul 2008, 16:23 · in reply to b sharp

b sharp wrote:

My own answer is literary/religious. I think those two plus Abaia and Erebus etc. go to the same place Zeus and Hera etc. go after the time of Jesus.

To an alternate universe with where their misguided worshipers suffer the inevitable consequences of idol worship like being forced to choose between celibacy and and early, painful death or being satisfied with only black and white television?

Jeff Wilson - [jwilson at io.com](mailto:jwilson@io.com)
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >