

Tzadkiel and Severian and the Holy Trinity

The Urth list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 13 Jul 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5664>

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Cliff Judge — 13 Jul 2010, 20:37

Where I am in my re-read of UotNS, it is clear that Tzadkiel is the ship itself and when the sailors refer to "the Captain" they mean the disembodied voice that speaks in their heads and that Severian has a conversation with at one point, I believe after he comes back from the dead when Sidero pulls his unconscious body out and, as it is implied, bangs him on the noggin hard enough to kill him.

I found myself intrigued by that conversation - Tzadkiel was asking him if he would fight for him, and Severian kept calling Tzadkiel "Master."

We also know that, though mortals believe that there are many such ships as Tzadkiel, most sailors seem to understand that, as impossible as it seems, there is only one ship, and she may well be infinite. Presumably she would have to be infinite inside (logically, eventually people would run into each other no matter how big the ship was otherwise, and there is also the statement "there were many more than seven holds.")

Thinking about the idea that Severian is a Christ-figure, could Tzadkiel be a sort of God figure? Or perhaps there is a trinity at work here, Severian, Zak, and the ship as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? I confess to being an ex-Catholic who didn't pay enough attention to his Catechism to know what else to look for to verify this. Or even who is who.

I don't know exactly why, but I felt that, when Severian lies dead and the first-person narrator is suddenly somebody other than Severian, saying how "I was going to tell him what he must do (find another? or something else?) but he was cold and dead," to seem to blur the distinction between Severian and Tzadkiel. There may not be a strong link there, might just be my imagination.

Then of course during the initial part of the judgment ceremony we have Tzadkiel being more like Christ and Severian being more like God the Father
- Tzadkiel is a proxy, led in chains to a rock where there is a loop with a sliding link. Along the way, Severian steps into his role of Torturer with a little judo action, then suddenly takes his place.

I'm going to digress for a moment because this isn't coming together as coherently as I had hoped when I started writing it. But at the end we do have the ship blotting out the sun to legitimize Apu-Punchau's divinity.

Ryan Dunn — 13 Jul 2010, 21:08 · in reply to Cliff Judge

Interesting. I can think of at least one other disembodied voices, in the Atrium of Time. Anywhere else?

...ryan

On Jul 13, 2010, at 4:37 PM, Cliff Judge <transentient at gmail.com> wrote:

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Jane Delawney — 29 Jul 2010, 00:15 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On 13/07/10 22:08, Ryan Dunn wrote:

Interesting. I can think of at least one other disembodied voices, in the Atrium of Time. Anywhere else?

That would be the voice of the 'mouths' in the apex of the Matachin Tower that speak to whoever is around and also to the 'mouths' in the other towers. Presumably some kind of automated communication mechanism

- given the age of the ship/towers, it's quite possible that these 'mouths' also speak to the Whorl and may be responsible for some of the god-communications thereupon.

I find it very interesting that of all the Guild, only Master Gurloes is not frightened by these 'mouths' and perhaps actively seeks out their uh ... company? Gurloes is a thwarted genius and a confirmed alcoholic, a very unhappy man indeed from what Severian tells us; but he does seem to have these strange insights (for instance: who exactly was it amongst the insane 'clients' of the Third Level that he chose to speak to, and what did they speak about?).

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brunians at brunians.org — 01 Aug 2010, 06:23 · in reply to Jane Delawney

Gurloes is a tragic and interesting figure.

He is father to Severian in a way that Palaemon is not.

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