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The Urth list — 4 messages, 3 voices, 21 Jul 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5670>

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Lee Berman — 21 Jul 2010, 11:39

I think Severian dies and is resurrected as an eidolon several times (probably five).

I don't think so. At the end of UotNS, Famulimus tells Severian that the Sev who died on Tzadkiel's ship 'was the son your mother bore', or words to that effect. If Severian dies, he just self-resurrects in the same body. He doesn't need aquastors unless he's cut off from the white fountain. I think the significance of the skull is what it symbolises.

Oh, yes, I'd forgotten that line. Thanks Tony. It does seem rather explicit.

A shame it can obliterate a nice theory. With Severian's death underwater or on the battlefield we can imagine a dead body surreptitiously replaced by an eidolon as a possibility. But not on the Sanguinary Fields. Somehow a dead copy of Severian's body would have to be mentioned by Dorcas or Hildegrin later. That was surely self-resurrection.

So perhaps all of Severian's power, resurrection, healing, water breathing were bestowed when he became an eidolon/aquastor on the Ship. And his powers are at least nascent as long as the White Fountain is within range.

Makes me wonder why Severian never had any expression of his power before Triskele. As a torturer there would be no shortage of injuries and dead bodies around. I expect it would be noticed if they started healing and coming back to life. Perhaps it was seeing the image of his dead mother in the grave which triggered his abilities into action.

Jeff Wilson — 21 Jul 2010, 19:45 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 7/21/2010 6:39 AM, Lee Berman wrote:

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If the original, all-meat Severian lasted until the Ship, the skull from Gyoll can't be his, nor a symbol for his mortal remains since he didn't leave any. I'd taken it to symbolize the previous time-loop iteration that he supposes did die, the way the multiple slots in the mausoleum do.

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As was his recovery from the ray at the jailers' keep.

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This seems out of sequence, he demonstrates resurrection and healing during the first four volumes.

I'd like to take credit for an idea that seems to have caught on, but when I said aquastors presumably could be turned to breathe water, I meant that as unliving projected images they needn't be dependent on air or any other necessities of life. Indeed, Aquastor Triskele is heard even after his physical form has dissipated. They can take advantage of cartoon conceits, since they are effectively 3D cartoons.

Of course, the level of fidelity needed to make an aquastor that *can* eat, breathe, etc. and eventually accumulate enough mass to continue independently after the projection stops might further allow alterations in its bodily plan, but there is no sign that this is ever done, even when one would think it would be greatly helpful to do so, like restoring Severian's leg.

Though this could mean that when Sev is eidoloned after his fall on the ship, they either chose to reproduce him at a time when he received considerable but not fatal injuries, chose a time when he had received otherwise mortal injuries but applied sufficient life-saving arts before he awoke, or they chose a time before he was injured in the fall for maximum fidelity of reproduction and then carefully monitored and beat him while unconscious to provide a convincing amount of injury for when he awoke.

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Or perhaps those traumas were perceived as just and did not arouse in him any feeling of sympathy. Which would make for an interesting interpretation of his feelings for Thecla and the nature of her trauma.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
IEEE Student Chapter Blog at
< <http://ieeetamut.org> >

Lee Berman — 21 Jul 2010, 23:38 · follows Jeff Wilson

Jeff Wilson- when I said aquastors presumably could be turned to breathe water, I meant that as unliving projected images they needn't be dependent on air or any other necessities of life.....since they are effectively 3D cartoons.

Or holograms? Wolfe does invoke them in the first few chapters and eidolons can shatter and become silver shards or something like that. Anyway, I guess they gain real substance by eating and drinking and adding read atoms to their bodies or something like that (say B, F and o?).

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I think we are meant to understand that the Ship is travelling outside of time and temporal sequencing there has little meaning, relative to Urth.

During the first four volumes the White Fountain is in existence and hurtling toward Urth. In fact it is much closer to Urth than when Severian takes conscious control of his power back in Typhon's era.

We are told the White Fountain is an aspect of Severian himself. So, when he was born it was under a star which was already a part of him and it had the potential to convey divine power to him throughout most of his life, conscious of it or not. (perhaps this is an allusion to another famous birth star?).

Jerry Friedman — 22 Jul 2010, 02:32 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>

On 7/21/2010 6:39 AM, Lee Berman wrote:

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would make for an interesting interpretation of his feelings for Thecla and the nature of her trauma.

I suspect it's more about compassion than justice. Severian has been trained to think of those people as "clients", the way sellers (not just Agia and Agilus) think of buyers. Just as their words convey no more meaning than the squeaking of mice, their suffering doesn't arouse compassion in him. Triskele's suffering does.

Jerry Friedman