

Resurrections

The Urth list — 12 messages, 6 voices, 30 Jul 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5680>

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Lee Berman — 30 Jul 2010, 16:32

Jeff Wilson- I get the sense that the author is trying to convey that the various "kinds of resurrection" are a mortal projection; there is only one source of the gift of life and that is the grace of the Increate. Then there are people who presume to decide that the Increate hasn't given them enough and will try to get more some other way, rather than living and sharing so that what they've been given **is** enough. This kind of substitution of one's judgment for that of the Increate is the first step on the dark path that eventually leads the likes of Typhon and Ceryx to airs of godhood, the way Vodalus presumes to substitute himself for the Autarch.

So, why doesn't Wolfe have Severian reject the Autarch's pharmicon at the last second and have him find the true, Increate-given, path toward becoming the New Sun and Conciliator? Are we to conclude that Urth itself has an allotted lifespan and it has no right to be reborn and all who assist Severian in this task are as sorcerous and evil as Vodalus and the Old Leech and others who seek artificially extended life?

I don't know, myself. I think there are some who take this sort of dismal view of the whole story. Severian as witless pinball bounced between evil antagonists.

Ryan Dunn — 30 Jul 2010, 16:43 · in reply to Lee Berman

On Jul 30, 2010, at 12:32 PM, Lee Berman wrote:

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Lee,

Aren't we supposed to get the vibe that "the power was in Severian all the time, he just didn't know it?"

Meaning pharmacon or not, claw or not, he had these powers. I thought that was demonstrated with Triskele in a very clear way. Severian does strive at length to attribute powers to the claw, but that is a bit of a loophole that suggests it was Severian, not any other talisman/affectation, that beholds the power.

So the question would be, where do HIS powers come from? Is it part of him being a 2nd iteration of himself? The first having gained access to the corridors of time, gone back to become Conciliator, and the Severian we follow being a product of prior Severian achievements?

...ryan

John Watkins — 30 Jul 2010, 16:58 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On Fri, Jul 30, 2010 at 12:43 PM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:

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My understanding.

Severian's superpowers come from the White Fountain. In Yesod, another universe entirely, the Autarch Severian is deemed worthy of linkage with the Fountain. The Fountain, which was always already linked with Severian in Yesod time, enters Briahe sufficiently early so that its light reaches Urth at or around the time of Apu Punctau. The Autarch Severian, on the other hand, is returned to Briahe during Typhon's time.

Severian always has some measure of superpowers when he is within the "broadcast range" of the influence of the Fountain, which coincides with the light of the Fountain.

Thus young Severian, who has not yet become the Autarch in his personal timeline, has superpowers--the light is hitting him, and with it whatever influence gives him personal powers. He is limited in using those powers because he doesn't know about them.

Late in Citadel, the superpowered Severian cuts himself on a thorn. His blood transmits some measure of his power to the thorn. He keeps it as a memorial of the Claw, a similar-looking thorn he once carried.

After travelling to Yesod and being bound to the Fountain in his personal timeline, he becomes aware of his powers and is far more adept with them, even to the degree that he is more apt to use them unconsciously.

Super Severian gives someone his blood-on thorn in Typhon's era. It is a treasured relic that becomes the Claw. Later on in Briahe's timeline, but earlier in Sev's personal timeline, he acquires the Claw, only powerful because of its linkage to the Sev who exists in Sev's future and Briahe's past. Because the Claw has some measure of power on its own, and because Sev has superpowers, it acts as a channel or focus for his powers--he doesn't know he has powers but he believes it does. So he sometimes tries to use its powers, which is really him using his powers and incidentally making the Claw glow, but he's not quite sure of how it works.

...ryan

Ryan Dunn — 30 Jul 2010, 17:03 · in reply to John Watkins

On Jul 30, 2010, at 12:58 PM, John Watkins wrote:
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Heheh. I think I somehow followed all of that, which is saying a lot about your articulateness, believe me.

So yes, the power was inside him (him being the Severian we are reading about). You traced its origins much better than I did, though to the same end.

...ryan

Jeff Wilson — 30 Jul 2010, 18:07 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 7/30/2010 11:32 AM, Lee Berman wrote:

Jeff Wilson- I get the sense that the author is trying to convey that the various "kinds of resurrection" are a mortal projection; there is only one source of the gift of life and that is the grace of the Increate. Then there are people who presume to decide that the Increate hasn't given them enough and will try to get more some other way, rather than living and sharing so that what they've been given **is** enough. This kind of substitution of one's judgment for that of the Increate is the first step on the dark path that eventually leads the likes of Typhon and Ceryx to airs of godhood, the way Vodalus presumes to substitute himself for the Autarch.

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in this task are as sorcerous and evil as Vodalus and the Old Leech and others who seek artificially extended life?

If there was a right to life from the Increate, it wouldn't be a gift, and there would be no grace in it.

No one's life is being artificially extended by the alzabo; the memory of the Autarch shares Severian, but the Autarch himself is dead. The alzabo eaters who are said to do it because they want more life than they have are projecting, as I wrote before. If Sevrian's life is bettered in some way by the memories he has ingested, that is no more condemnable than one's life being enriched by learning. The reprehensible thing about it is that it may be done in violation of the person's will, and that it involves eating part of a person. But babes feed from their mother, and a pelican that wounds her breast to feed her chicks is held up as a sign of loyalty and service, and Christians are enjoined to eat and drink of the flesh and the blood of Jesus Christ.

So if the Increate's representative on Urth says, "I call upon you to eat my brain for the good all mankind," his good and faithful servant who by a providence already has experience doing this sort of thing correctly says, "Yes, sir!"

Or that's the way I see it.

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

Jeff Wilson — 30 Jul 2010, 18:09 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On 7/30/2010 11:43 AM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

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Whatever the mechanism, the reference to Joseph's dream makes it pretty clear to me that he is correct in his feeling that it comes from the Increate, like Joseph always claims of his gift of divination.

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David Stockhoff — 31 Jul 2010, 18:20 · in reply to John Watkins

Exactly. In mythological terms, there are visible signs that someone will become a god, because such is the nature of godhood. That's how gods can be born and yet still be gods---a narrative problem the Greeks constantly had to fudge because they had no concept of time travel.

Artifacts associated with gods, such as Apollo's lyre, Diana's bow, etc. would become holy, but not terribly useful to anyone other than their owner. (At least the Claw doesn't kill anyone who tries to use it.)

John Watkins wrote:

On Fri, Jul 30, 2010 at 12:43 PM, Ryan Dunn <ryan@liftingfaces.com> wrote:

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David Stockhoff — 31 Jul 2010, 18:27 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

What's the reference to Joseph's dream?

And who is the Old Leech everyone is talking about?

Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 7/30/2010 11:43 AM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

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Jerry Friedman — 01 Aug 2010, 03:47 · in reply to David Stockhoff

From: David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net>

What's the reference to Joseph's dream?

I don't remember that either.

And who is the Old Leech everyone is talking about?

The doctor who works for Vodalus and treats Severian in /Citadel/, Ch. XXVI. The phrase "old leech" is in the text.

Thanks to Jeff Wilson for pointing that Severian's memory is connected with his ability to heal by turning back time. I'd never made that connection.

Jerry Friedman

Jeff Wilson — 01 Aug 2010, 09:13 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 7/31/2010 1:27 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

What's the reference to Joseph's dream?

In URTH XXXVIII, while Severian is also a seer imprisoned by the authorities, there is a literal biblical reference to it, immediately followed by a dream with Revelations imagery, or maybe Peter's:

"In those moments I knew my power, that could draw whole worlds to me and incremate them as an artist burns his earths for pigments. In the brown book, now lost, that I carried and read so long that at last I had committed to memory its whole contents (though they had once seemed inexhaustible) there is this passage: 'Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; the sun and the moon and eleven stars made obeisance to me.' Its words show plainly how much wiser

the peoples of ages long past were than we are now; not for nothing is that book titled The Book of the Wonders of Urth and Sky. "I too dreamed a dream. I dreamed that I called the power of my star down upon myself, and rising, crossed (Thecla as well as Severian) to our barred door, and grasping its bars, bent them until we could easily have passed between them. But when we bent them it seemed we parted a curtain, and beyond it beheld a second curtain and Tzadkiel, neither larger than ourselves nor smaller, with the dirk afire. "

And who is the Old Leech everyone is talking about?

He appears early in CITADEL XXVI; while treating Severian for his injuries at the ziggurat, he mentions being from Nessus and seems to be a medical researcher ministering to the rebels' steady supply of trauma cases presumably for the opportunity to experiment on the otherwise hopeless patients. Maybe some not so hopeless, since he seems to have produced a boy that can be used to transfuse a full-grown man and recover in a day or less. Mantis seems to think it's possible he sacrifices children for for ritual benefit.

He's really old, and might be an Inire disguise except that in XXIX an old, bent and deformed shaman in a mask with a monkey-headed staff shows up in the same precession at the same time, and who appears to be the person Severian is thinking of later when he tells Rudesind he knows his master was with him in the jungle.

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Jeff Wilson — 01 Aug 2010, 09:14 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On 8/1/2010 4:13 AM, Jeff Wilson wrote:

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I'm sorry, the shaman shows up in chapter XXVII.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
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< <http://ieeetamut.org> >

David Stockhoff — 01 Aug 2010, 17:40 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Ah, very good.

Jeff Wilson wrote:

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