

Two Hildegrins

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 10 May 1998

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William H. Ansley — 10 May 1998, 22:29

I am re-reading TBotNS, as I have mentioned before, I think. I am trying to be more analytical this time (about the fourth) but I keep getting drawn into the story and forget to be "on the lookout" for patterns and so on. What TBotNS really needs (for scholarly purposes anyway) is a thorough, comprehensive and intelligently designed index. I have even thought of trying to create one, but I don't think I could find the time to do one justice (or even do one at all).

I do have a question that I don't think has been addressed on this list before, at least directly, now that I have finished *_Claw_* again. Why did Severian see **two** Hildegrins, "one who grappled with me, one who fought something invisible." (*_Claw_*, ch. 31, p. 409, Orb ed.)

As I think I understand it now, when Severian came down off the roof to help Hildegrin capture Apu-Punchau and got too close, Severian and Apu-Punchau "collapsed" (ala *_Free Live Free_*) into one being (Severian) who was wrestling with Hildegrin since Apu-Punchau had been. But I am not sure why Severian saw that other Hildegrin who was fighting "nothing"?

BTW, in earlier discussions of this scene in this list, the assumption seemed to have been that Hildegrin was trying to kill Apu-Punchau. But it seems to me to be just as valid a reading to say that he was trying to capture him. "Hildegrin held him, but he could not subdue him." (ibid.). If Hildegrin had wanted to kill Apu-Punchau, wouldn't he have just tried to stab him, rather than subduing him?

Even more BTW, the encounter between Hildegrin and the "bandylegged men" has many similarities to the encounter between a contemporary man and ancient Iroquois warriors in "Sightings at Twin Mounds" in *_Storeys from the Old Hotel_*.

William Ansley