

(no subject)

The Urth list — 7 messages, 6 voices, 14 Jan 2011

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5904>

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Andrew Mason — 14 Jan 2011, 21:59

Gerry Quinn wrote:

If all Severian's lovers in BotNS are close relatives, his family would seem to be extraordinarily diverse and geographically dispersed. ?His lovers are spread (so to speak) ?from the slums of Nessus to the Autarch's Palace to villages in the interior and the minor aristocracy of provincial towns. They include pureborn exultants and those who are apparently lowborn, and some who are in between. ?If we include UotNS, we may add a woman from thousands of years in the past, and a female creature not born on Urth, nor even in Urth's universe. ?But even leaving these two ?aside, the thesis seems improbable to say the least.

I suspect that Severian's lovers represent the different classes of the Commonwealth, linking him to all of them.

Thecla - exultant.

Valeria - armiger.

Dorcas - optimate.

Jolenta - commonalty.

Cyriaca - (former) religious.

Daria - servant of the throne.

Apheta - cacogen. (She would certainly be called that if she came to Urth.)

(The first four are explicitly listed as examples of those classes in the appendix to COTC. The others have not yet been introduced.)

Thecla's khaibit represents an anomalous group who don't really fit into the classification. Pia represents autochthons, a group which hasn't been highlighted when the classification is given. Gunnie/Burgunadofara can be seen as representing off-Urth humans, and the tall woman was born millions of years before the Commonwealth existed.

Furthermore, apart from Dorcas there is just one woman mentioned in the story whom most agree is plausibly a close relative of Severian's. ?That is Merryn - and there is no indication that Severian has sexual relations with her. ?If Wolfe intended to indicate that Severian's lovers were hidden relatives, leaving Merryn out appears rather bizarre!

There is also a fair chance that Casdoe is a relation of his - likewise.

Son of Witz — 15 Jan 2011, 00:22 · in reply to Andrew Mason

On Jan 14, 2011, at 1:59 PM, Andrew Mason <andrew.mason53@googlemail.com> wrote:

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Gunnie/Burgunadofara can be seen as representing off-Urth humans, and the tall woman was born millions of years before the Commonwealth existed.

VERY interesting.

I think you've hit the nail on the head, Andrew.

I'd say the Khaibit's are more or less their own class. Enslaved Prostitutes.

Gerry Quinn — 15 Jan 2011, 16:36 · in reply to Andrew Mason

From: "Andrew Mason" <andrew.mason53 at googlemail.com>
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That seems reasonable, though it could simply be an artefact of Severian's rather extensive... coverage.

- Gerry Quinn

David Stockhoff — 15 Jan 2011, 16:49 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

Points for difficulty, but a deduction for trying too hard. (^-^)

On 1/15/2011 11:36 AM, Gerry Quinn wrote:
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- Gerry Quinn

Jack Smith — 15 Jan 2011, 18:11 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Dorcas did not seem like an optimate to me, since optimates were the "best" people of the Roman republic and Dorcas never struck me as being what we might call upper or upper middle class. What Wolfe says in the appendix is that "optimates appear to be more or less wealthy traders...there are some hints that Dorcas originally belonged to this class." (CotC, appendix) Now that sounds more like it. Dorcas seems somewhat refined (more than Agia) and her father appears to have been successful. But her marriage to the old boatman brought her down in the world economically, and then led to her death. A sad figure.

On Sat, Jan 15, 2011 at 11:49 AM, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:
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On 1/15/2011 11:36 AM, Gerry Quinn wrote:

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avast! Antivirus: Outbound message clean.
Virus Database (VPS): 110115-0, 01/15/2011
Tested on: 1/15/2011 11:49:51 AM
avast! - copyright (c) 1988-2011 AVAST Software.
<http://www.avast.com>

Jeff Wilson — 16 Jan 2011, 17:04 · in reply to Jack Smith

On 1/15/2011 12:11 PM, Jack Smith wrote:

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I got the impression that they were doing okay until she died, then he was okay for a while more until he went into a depression and ended up working as a boatman so he could keep looking for her body every day. I'm judging this on the basis that Ouen has a cloisonne of his mother, apparently a self-portrait since the painting business comes down her side of the family and Dorcas does various little artisty things while she's with Severian. The obsessive boatman wouldn't have wanted to part with his last picture of her esp to a child who might lose it, so there must have been another for him to keep somewhere. Ergo, if they could afford to devote time and materials to multiple portraits of family members, they weren't doing too badly.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana
< <http://www.tamut.edu/CIL> >

Jeff Wilson — 16 Jan 2011, 18:23 · in reply to Son of Witz

On 1/14/2011 6:22 PM, Son of Witz wrote:

On Jan 14, 2011, at 1:59 PM, Andrew Mason<[andrew.mason53 at gmail.com](mailto:andrew.mason53@gmail.com)> wrote:

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Didn't Sev pointedly reject Daria?

Apheta - cacogen. (She would certainly be called that if she came to Urth.)

Yea and no; "cacogen" is Urthspeak for Bug Eyed Monster, and hierodules wear scary monster masks when they visit Urth undercover. Apheta, being a hierarch, doesn't need a disguise because she appears outwardly human and if she reveals herself to be an exalted being, well, "divine messenger" is right up there just under the Autarch.

VERY interesting.

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They could be the aristocrats of the underpeople, made to pass for human unlike the cat women, mastiff men, anpiels, etc.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana
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