

Miles, Jonas and that sailor guy

The Urth list — 3 messages, 2 voices, 09 Feb 2011

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5960>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

Andrew Mason — 09 Feb 2011, 23:27

Marc Aramini wrote:

You know, I've never been really sold on the idea that the soldier Miles or whatever is really a returned Jonas, and yesterday for the first time in a long time I was reading the ending of Citadel (what wonderful imagery) and the description of the masculine voice and the feminine voices under the water by the sailor who used Jonas' Wellerisms kind of made me wonder once again if there is a universal consensus that Severian is right in believing that soldier guy is Jonas.

No, I've always doubted it. Severian thinks Miles is Jonas because he uses Wellerisms, and even works out a theory which would explain why robots do so. But later we discover this way of speaking is common among sailors, used by Maxellindis' uncle, several sailors on Tzadkiel's ship, and even Eata in later life.

(I suppose Urth-bound sailors might have got it off interplanetary sailors, who got it off robots. But it may just be that Miles' parents were sailors.)

It's a puzzling question when we should trust Severian and when we shouldn't. People seem very ready to accept his Miles-Jonas theory, and his 'first Severian' theory - which is proved to be at least partly wrong, in connection with Apu-Punchau. Yet his claims that Typhon is lying, and that Merryn and the Cumaean are not the two witches he met as a boy, are generally dismissed.

Andrew Mason — 09 Feb 2011, 23:40 · follows Andrew Mason

Jeff Wilson wrote:

Where does Severian retrieve Jonas' spirit from? Does the tin-drover body fall over dead in some distant galaxy when he does this?

It's part of Severian's theory that the mirrors are not, as he first thought, simply space-travel devices. So if Miles is Jonas - which I'm not sure about - he presumably never was in a distant galaxy. (I'm not sure where he was, as Severian doesn't elaborate.)

In any case, in the light of Long Sun, it seems that in that universe a spirit can be in two places at once - Typhon both on the Whorl and on Urth, Silk both in Mainframe and in his body. (Once the separation has taken place, they may really be two spirits, but they have the same origin.)

Gerry Quinn — 10 Feb 2011, 00:51 · in reply to Andrew Mason

From: "Andrew Mason" <andrew.mason53 at gmail.com>

Marc Aramini wrote:

You know, I've never been really sold on the idea that the soldier Miles or whatever is really a returned Jonas, and yesterday for the first time in a long time I was reading the ending of Citadel (what wonderful

imagery) and the description of the masculine voice and the feminine voices under the water by the sailor who used Jonas' Wellerisms kind of made me wonder once again if there is a universal consensus that Severian is right in believing that soldier guy is Jonas.

No, I've always doubted it. Severian thinks Miles is Jonas because he uses Wellerisms, and even works out a theory which would explain why robots do so. But later we discover this way of speaking is common among sailors, used by Maxellindis' uncle, several sailors on Tzadkiel's ship, and even Eata in later life.

He also dreams of a woman with red-gold hair, whom Severian identifies with Jolenta.

It's a puzzling question when we should trust Severian and when we shouldn't. People seem very ready to accept his Miles-Jonas theory ,and his 'first Severian' theory - which is proved to be at least partly wrong, in connection with Apu-Punchau. Yet his claims that Typhon is lying, and that Merryyn and the Cumaean are _not_ the two witches he met as a boy, are generally dismissed.

I certainly don't dismiss the latter. I'm not sure how he'd know anything about Typhon, though.

As for Miles, I really don't know. One idea that has occurred to me is that he resurrected the body of the guy who was killed when Jonas's ship crashed, and whose parts were taken to repair Jonas. But then why would he have anything of Jonas's personality?

On the other hand, Jonas is a machine, so shouldn't he have been resurrected as one, if indeed he is resurrectable?

It's a puzzler.

- Gerry Quinn