

Catherine

The Urth list — 16 messages, 5 voices, 24 Oct 2011

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/6082>

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.

Lee Berman — 24 Oct 2011, 16:23

larry miller: Thats an interesting theory that Catherine may be the woman dug up by Vodalus. If she indeed inhabited the Atrium of Time as some suggest she could have easily have died after her appearances as St Katherine and been buried in the past. Perhaps she was being led to her death on the Path of Air? I also would love to hear your theory on this, no matter how fantastical.

Okay. A little preparatory spade work is necessary though. First, I'd say the Atrium of Time itself is not itself a time travel device. HOwever it is surrounded by towers which are. We have The Last House (Master Ash) as a model of static time travel structures. Severian has trouble finding it and Valeria's tower without following the proper path through a labyrinthine entranceway. The lower levels of these time structures open earlier in time. The upper levels open later in time. Valeria lives in the lower levels of her tower. She has an antique quality and thus she likely dwells in the past.

Catherine is apparently a Citadel dweller. The Path of Air is part of the House Absolute (actually part of Father Inire's Secret House, but anyway...). What connections are there from The Citadel to The House Absolute?

We are told Ultan's Library extends from The Citadel to House Absolute. It is below ground level and Severian has to go down some stairs to get there. We are told Rudesind's Art Gallery extends from The Citadel to HOuse Absolute. It seems to be roughly at ground level. Perhaps there is another passageway connecting Citadel and House Absolute which starts at the top of one of the towers off the Atrium of Time. Hence "Path of Air." Since this pathway goes to the top of one of these towers, it exists in Severian's future. About 60 years in his future, I'd say.

Severian sees the appearances of his mother as Holy Katharine and the woman in the coffin when he is about age 20. But he sees the sobbing woman being escorted by soldiers on the day of the Flood, 60 years in his future, when Valeria is about 80. valeria is depicted as an embittered old crone, as Autarchia living in the House Absolute. But she was born in the Citadel and was a resident of an Atrium of Time tower.

I think this implies old Valeria knows about the Path of Air, knows who Catherine is and knows that she is escaping from a death sentence from 60 years in the past. She assigns her soldiers to escort her back to her fate of getting her head chopped off every year and/or being throttled by Allowin's Necklace allowing Vodalus and his followers to dig her up and eat her.

Lee Berman — 24 Oct 2011, 16:33 · follows Lee Berman

Thecla was important. But perhaps not as important as eating the mother of the Conciliator/New Sun (which Vodalus may or may not know about. But SOMEBODY in power knows about it).

They're not so fussy. It looks like they'll eat anyone, at a pinch, even if some of them have preferences:

A voice I recognized as belonging to the armiger asked, "Have any of you seen her yet?" The others had sounded merely boastful, but there was hunger of a kind I had never heard before behind his simple words. He might have been some lost traveler asking about his home. "No, Waldgrave." (Another voice.) "Alcmund says a good one, not old or too young." "Not another tribade, I hope."

Your supposition is not supported by the text Gerry. If Vodalus and his followers were happy to eat anyone, why did they fly all the way down to Nessus and the Necropolis and risk their lives getting that particular body? Surely there are plenty of dead people around Saltus and other surrounding towns they could eat, eh?

Moreover, I've suggested that Vodalus is operating on the commands of someone superior to him. If he doesn't know the significance of their feast choice I see no reason for Waldgrave and Alcmund to know them. I find the mention of a tribade (lesbian) to be of significance when it comes to Severian's family.

Gerry Quinn — 24 Oct 2011, 17:01 · in reply to Lee Berman

From: Lee Berman

Gerry Quinn:

Lee Berman:

Thecla was important. But perhaps not as important as eating the mother of the Conciliator/New Sun (which Vodalus may or may not know about. But SOMEBODY in power knows about it).

They're not so fussy. It looks like they'll eat anyone, at a pinch, even if some of them have preferences:

A voice I recognized as belonging to the armiger asked, "Have any of you seen her yet?" The others had sounded merely boastful, but there was hunger of a kind I had never heard before behind his simple words. He might have been some lost traveler asking about his home. "No, Waldgrave." (Another voice.) "Alcmund says a good one, not old or too young." "Not another tribade, I hope."

Your supposition is not supported by the text Gerry. If Vodalus and his followers were happy to eat anyone, why did they fly all the way down to Nessus and the Necropolis and risk their lives getting that particular body? Surely there are plenty of dead people around Saltus and other surrounding towns they could eat, eh?

When Severian comes to Saltus (though of course it is much later) it is on high alert against the Vodalarii. Maybe it's easier get corpses from the big city. It could be that in the countryside the graves are close in to town, and better guarded. Or it could be that they eat in part for knowledge, and you can only consume so many yokels without developing an urge for richer fare.

The text does clearly indicate, however, that they are not excessively fussy.

Moreover, I've suggested that Vodalus is operating on the commands of someone superior to him. If he doesn't know the significance of their feast choice I see no reason for Waldgrave and Alcmund to know them. I find the mention of a tribade (lesbian) to be of significance when it comes to Severian's family.

Vodalus does, of course, know who Thecla is, because Thea does. Given that Thea wants to be there, it seems likely that they do think of it as a sort of communion, and not altogether evil in

their eyes. Of course one of the Autarch's courtesans would be a great prize in terms of knowledge too (later, it helps Severian find his way out of the Antechamber). Is there another reason too? I don't know, but these seem reasons enough. [Of course, ultimately it may be assumed that Gene Wolfe has ordained that Severian must eat Thecla, whatever the detailed circumstances.]

As for the tribade comment, it only made me wonder whether it was a female Vodalarian who brought up the issue. What you think tribades in general, or the particular tribade who was apparently on last week's menu, have to do with Severian's family, I have no idea.

- Gerry Quinn

Jeff Wilson — 24 Oct 2011, 17:48 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 10/24/2011 11:23 AM, Lee Berman wrote:

I think this implies old Valeria knows about the Path of Air, knows who Catherine is and knows that she is escaping from a death sentence from 60 years in the past. She assigns her soldiers to escort her back to her fate of getting her head chopped off every year and/or being throttled by Allowin's Necklace allowing Vodalus and his followers to dig her up and eat her.

How would she survive being beheaded umpteen times?

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at clueland.com

Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana

< <http://www.tamut.edu/CIL> >

larry miller — 25 Oct 2011, 01:50 · in reply to Lee Berman

That makes perfect sense to me. Doesn't Sev search for the Atrium from above in a flyer when Autarch? This fits nicely with The Last House that can only be seen and approached from certain angles. And it was the Pelerines (that Catherine belonged to) that sent Sev to Ash with very specific directions to find the Last House. Perhaps the Pelerines have some connection with the Temporal Obfuscation technology adherent to these structures? Perhaps even Mannea herself once inhabited the Atrium and thus knows how said structures are to be found. In response to Jeff's question I seem to remember Sev mentioning a trick mechanism and fake severed head being used to create the illusion of Katherine's beheading.

David Stockhoff — 25 Oct 2011, 02:39 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

I noticed the following line in Talos' play:

FAMILIAR: The Contessa waits outside, and as she is of exalted blood, and a

favorite of our sovereign's, I beg you see her first.

Enter the CONTESSA.

This suggests Sev's mom was a favorite of the Old Autarch's. If so, this confirms for me that Sev only learned/suspected his maternity upon his ascension.

(1) He only suppresses his knowledge as he writes the Inn of Lost Loves scenes because he didn't know it at the time they occurred. He can't be accused of hiding it, just of not connecting the dots for his reader. He's being delicate in the narrative because of Dorcas as well and has no wish to be cruel to his father. So he leaves the obvious unsaid, even for the reader.

(2) AFAICT, when Sev interrogates Ouen he is only interested in figuring out Dorcas. He already suspects that she is much older than she looks, and that Ouen is her son. He has no idea Ouen is his father. He only inquires about Catherine after he is told he resembles Ouen; he puts 2+2

together because the Old Autarch knows Catherine but not Ouen. Nor, presumably, did the Autarch know about Sev or of twins, or else Sev would know about any Severa. This confirms that the Autarch had no hand in any breeding project, but Inire may have.

(3) Sev's motive for not making his parentage clear at the beginning of his story remains one of needing to set up the orphan tale, and it persists at the end. It's a genre thing: you can't have "Chapter 82: In Which Our Hero Finds His Parents" without changing the tale from "orphan makes it alone in the world" to "orphan finds success and parents." In fairy tales, plenty of orphans discover their parents, which discovery tends to dominate the resolution. BotNS satisfies this technically but not emotionally by passing it by.

Nor does Sev go in search of Catherine, because he is sure, as Old Autarch and young torturer, that she is dead. Andre-Driussi has some great ideas about the Atrium of Time, but Catherine's hiding there doesn't work, because Severian would know she still lives. Further, while Valeria as ancient, frozen child has no real flaws I can see, I don't see the point in a noble family serving the Autarchy for a chiliad by ... not even knowing time has passed. Loyalty must mean more than that.

David Stockhoff — 25 Oct 2011, 02:49 · in reply to larry miller

On 10/24/2011 9:50 PM, larry miller wrote:

That makes perfect sense to me. Doesnt Sev search for the Atrium from above in a flyer when Auturch? This fits nicely with The Last House that can only be seen and approached from certain angles. And it was the Pelerines (that Catherine belonged to) that sent Sev to Ash with very specific directions to find the Last House. Perhaps the Pelerines have some connection with the Temporal Obfuscation technology adherrant to these structures? Perhaps even Mannea herself once inhabited the Atrium and thus knows how said structures are to be found.

Why would the Pelerines have anything to do with the Atrium of Time?

Catherine had escaped from them---not to them---so why would she go there afterward?

What good is a secret that neither we nor the narrator can guess?

Who would have allowed Catherine to escape there when all the signs point to her death by beheading?

Severian knows the Atrium---why does he run there to marry Valeria without once stopping by to see his mother?

Mannea is yet another Pelerine named after a saint who was beheaded.

Lee Berman — 25 Oct 2011, 03:07 · follows David Stockhoff

larry miller: Doesnt Sev search for the Atrium from above in a flyer when Auturch?

Well, he is searching for Valeria's tower. He can't find it. He has to find her by

retracing his steps through the twisting path from the oubillette.

This fits nicely with The Last House that can only be seen and approached from certain angles.

Yes. Severian tries a short cut by climbing right up the cliff to it. When he reaches the top, it isn't there. He has to follow the proper twisting path. I think Mantis

(m. andre-driussi is working on a similar theory, but I beat him to it. Heh).

And it was the Pelerines (that Catherine belonged to) that sent Sev to Ash with very specific directions to find the Last House. Perhaps the Pelerines have some connection with the Temporal Obfuscation technology adherant to these structures?

I think that is very insightful. The Pelerines really might be involved. There are a few clues that they may be more involved with witches than we might expect. Anyway there is a mysterious "Red Tower" which is not so easy to identify the residents of as the other mentioned towers. Perhaps this Red Tower is the home of the Pelerines and perhaps this tower is one of those around the Atrium of Time.

In response to Jeffs question I seem to remember Sev mentioning a trick mechanism and fake severed head being used to create the illusion of Katherines beheading.

Was Jeff's question about how Catherine can survive being beheaded so many times? Anyway, yes the trick mechanism is described in detail. Severian can do this because, as an apprentice, he helped assemble it. He knows how the trick works. Lightweight wooden sword, wax head, fake blood etc.

It was Dave Tallman who noted that when Severian goes to lift this fake sword it is very heavy. Also, when he works up the nerve to swing the thing down he seems surprised to find that the sword meets resistance for a second. It is like most other Wolfe puzzles. We can ignore it and just assume Severian is having these perceptual problems because he is drunk. Or we can start to wonder why Wolfe goes through the trouble to decribe a fake sword as lightweight then a few paragraphs later tell us the sword Severian used felt very heavy.

This theory is not mine in origin but I think it has merit. I wouldn't think much of it if I didn't agree with the puzzle solution that this "maid" is Severian's mother. Adding Dave's observation that the three maids in the play were all beheaded saint names and it gains even greater heft.

To answer a question by David Stockhoff, no I don't think this beheading (fake ones or real one) is part of Catherine's torture sentence. I think the penalty for adultery is strangulation and in the Citadel, this is accomplished by the guild using Allowin's Necklace. That's why the corpse has a "livid face". Severian does not have this device in Thrax and thus must use his hands (though of course he stops before completing the action).

larry miller — 25 Oct 2011, 03:59 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Sorry I should have worded my post a little better. In every instance I use the word Pelerines I should have used Mannea. Therefore maybe Mannea has a connection with the Atrium of Time. My guess as to helped her escape to the Atrium-the Cumaen, who surely knew of Severians destiny and sought to ensure his birth by hiding Catherine in the Atrium.

What secret are you referring to?

It is not a fact that Catherine is the real St Katherine. She just portrays her in the ceremonies.

As to why Severian doesn't visit her after becoming Auturch? Maybe he does and just doesn't write about it. Or if she is indeed the woman dug up by Vodalus she's already dead by this point.

On 10/24/11, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:

On 10/24/2011 9:50 PM, Larry Miller wrote:

That makes perfect sense to me. Doesn't Sev search for the Atrium from above in a flyer when Auturch? This fits nicely with The Last House that can only be seen and approached from certain angles. And it was the Pelerines (that Catherine belonged to) that sent Sev to Ash with very specific directions to find the Last House. Perhaps the Pelerines have some connection with the Temporal Obfuscation technology adherent to these structures? Perhaps even Mannea herself once inhabited the Atrium and thus knows how said structures are to be found.

Why would the Pelerines have anything to do with the Atrium of Time?

Catherine had escaped from them---not to them---so why would she go there afterward?

What good is a secret that neither we nor the narrator can guess?

Who would have allowed Catherine to escape there when all the signs point to her death by beheading?

Severian knows the Atrium---why does he run there to marry Valeria without once stopping by to see his mother?

Mannea is yet another Pelerine named after a saint who was beheaded.

Jeff Wilson — 25 Oct 2011, 06:46 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 10/24/2011 10:07 PM, Lee Berman wrote:

It was Dave Tallman who noted that when Severian goes to lift this fake sword it is very heavy. Also, when he works up the nerve to swing the thing down he seems surprised to find that the sword meets resistance for a second. It is like most other Wolfe puzzles.

We can ignore it and just assume Severian is having these perceptual problems because he is drunk. Or we can start to wonder why Wolfe goes through the trouble to describe a fake sword as lightweight then a few paragraphs later tell us the sword Severian used felt very heavy.

He doesn't drink until after the ceremony, so drunkenness doesn't cut it. It could be just straight nerves, I recall being similarly warped in my perceptions on my wedding day, the slender metal band was heavy as an ingot. Severian's elevation is his wedding day piled atop graduation and 21st birthday.

To answer a question by David Stockhoff, no I don't think this beheading (fake ones or real one) is part of Catherine's torture sentence. I think the penalty for adultery is strangulation and

in the Citadel, this is accomplished by the guild using Allowin's Necklace. That's why the corpse has a "livid face". Severian does not have this device in Thrax and thus must use his hands (though of course he stops before completing the action).

If the beheading isn't part of Catherine's sentence, how are they allowed to do it? It is repeated several times that they may not increase or lessen the penalties of their clients. If it is just a stage beheading, why not have anyone do it? They could hire it done, or have an apprentice in drag play the martyr.

I am thinking perhaps there is a double illusion: he is not given a real sword nor just a wooden prop, but something that still draws real blood from real flesh without being fatal. The business with the head and the fuligin drape are as read, but the chrism is true. The hesitation would be because he detects something amiss even beyond his nerves.

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

David Stockhoff — 25 Oct 2011, 11:16 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 10/24/2011 11:07 PM, Lee Berman wrote:

I think that is very insightful. The Pelerines really might be involved. There are a few clues that they may be more involved with witches than we might expect. Anyway there is a mysterious "Red Tower" which is not so easy to identify the residents of as the other mentioned towers. Perhaps this Red Tower is the home of the Pelerines and perhaps this tower is one of those around the Atrium of Time.

Certainly the Pelerines are a good candidate to occupy the Red Tower. Everyone in the Citadel is a relic of a past age.

To answer a question by David Stockhoff, no I don't think this beheading (fake ones or real one) is part of Catherine's torture sentence. I think the penalty for adultery is strangulation and in the Citadel, this is accomplished by the guild using Allowin's Necklace. That's why the corpse has a "livid face". Severian does not have this device in Thrax and thus must use his hands (though of course he stops before completing the action).

I agree about adultery and strangulation by whatever means. But I may be confused about something. As I understand it, you believe Katharine, who was beheaded, to be Catherine, who was strangled. Right?

David Stockhoff — 25 Oct 2011, 12:22 · in reply to larry miller

On 10/24/2011 11:59 PM, larry miller wrote:
Sorry I should have worded my post a little better. In every instance I use the word Pelerines I should have used Mannea. Therefore maybe Mannea has a connection with the Atrium of Time.
My guess as to
helped her escape to the Atrium-the Cumaen, who surely knew of

Severians destiny and sought to ensure his birth by hiding Catherine in the Atrium.

What secret are you referring to?

It is not a fact that Catherine is the real St Katherine. She just portrays her in the ceremonies.

As to why Severian doesnt visit her after becoming Auturch? Maybe he does and just doesnt write about it. Or if she is indeed the woman dug up by Vodalus shes already dead by this point.

There is a theory that the Other Lords tried to kill Dorcas, putting her in a coma at Ouen's birth. An intervention in the opposite direction makes sense as part of that theory. But why the Cumaeen?

The secret I refer to is the Atrium and Catherine as its refugee. Do you think she is dead?

David Stockhoff — 25 Oct 2011, 12:23 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On 10/25/2011 2:46 AM, Jeff Wilson wrote:

If the beheading isn't part of Catherine's sentence, how are they allowed to do it? It is repeated several times that they may not increase or lessen the penalties of their clients. If it is just a stage beheading, why not have anyone do it? They could hire it done, or have an apprentice in drag play the martyr.

I am thinking perhaps there is a double illusion: he is not given a real sword nor just a wooden prop, but something that still draws real blood from real flesh without being fatal. The business with the head and the fuligin drape are as read, but the chrism is true. The hesitation would be because he detects something amiss even beyond his nerves.

All I can tell is that beheading was Katharine's sentence, not Catherine's.

Lee Berman — 25 Oct 2011, 12:40 · follows David Stockhoff

David Stockhoff:

This suggests Sev's mom was a favorite of the Old Autarch's. If so, this confirms for me that Sev only learned/suspected his maternity upon his ascension.

(1) He only suppresses his knowledge as he writes the Inn of Lost Loves scenes because he didn't know it at the time they occurred. He can't be accused of hiding it, just of not connecting the dots for his reader.

He's being delicate in the narrative because of Dorcas as well and has no wish to be cruel to his father. So he leaves the obvious unsaid, even for the reader.

(2) AFAICT, when Sev interrogates Ouen he is only interested in figuring out Dorcas. He already suspects that she is much older than she looks, and that Ouen is her son. He has no idea Ouen is his father. He only inquires about Catherine after he is told he resembles Ouen; he puts 2+2 together because the Old Autarch knows Catherine but not Ouen. Nor, presumably, did the Autarch know about Sev or of twins, or else Sev would know about any Severa. This confirms that the Autarch had no hand in any breeding project, but Inire may have.

Excellent insight in identifying Severian's motivation of going to Ouen as one of his first acts after becoming autarch (and acquiring the memories). And good catch in noting Contessa Carina as one of the autarch's favorites. All in all a great analysis!

Lee Berman — 25 Oct 2011, 13:16 · follows David Stockhoff

David Stockhoff: Why would the Pelerines have anything to do with the Atrium of Time?

Well, if I understand Larry correctly, Severian is guided to the Last House by a Pelerine (or Mannea, specifically). The Last House is the same sort of time structure as the towers around the Atrium of Time. Perhaps the Pelerines are familiar with such structures because they inhabit one at the Citadel.

Who would have allowed Catherine to escape there when all the signs point to her death by beheading?

Severian knows the Atrium--why does he run there to marry Valeria without once stopping by to see his mother?

Well, as you say later, beheading is not Catherine's sentence, it is Holy Katharine's (and only because breaking her on the wheel didn't work). But I agree with you that Catherine, Severian's birth mother is probably dead and that Severian himself knows this. But there may be some copies of her floating around still. There is a dream sequence of Thecla as a little girl seeking...someone...among a room of like-looking women. Perhaps this dream applies as much to Severian as Thecla.

larry miller: As to why Severian doesn't visit her after becoming Autarch? Maybe he does and just doesn't write about it. Or if she is indeed the woman dug up by Vodalus she's already dead by this point.

I agree most with the last sentence. The appearance Catherine makes toward the very end of this story shows her weeping and apparently being escorted to somewhere she doesn't want to go. She is wearing a pale gown as is the woman in the grave at the very beginning of the story. I can't believe Wolfe would bookend his masterpiece with two dark-haired women in pale gowns unless it was meant to be very significant.

Jeff Wilson: If the beheading isn't part of Catherine's sentence, how are they allowed to do it? It is repeated several times that they may not increase or lessen the penalties of their clients. If it is just a stage beheading, why not have anyone do it?

I'm confused by this question. It is supposed to be a stage act. They can't let just anyone do it because it is part of the ritual of elevation to journeyman.

David Stockhoff: I agree about adultery and strangulation by whatever means. But I may be confused about something. As I understand it, you believe Katharine, who was beheaded, to be Catherine, who was strangled. Right?

It is Dave Tallman's theory but I kind of like it (actually I may have distorted his original version). I think the idea is that every year the maid playing Holy Katharine is mock-beheaded. Heck if there are multiple journeyman, she might be mock-beheaded a few times in one night. Is it the same maid every year, or a succession of khaibits? I dunno.

Anyway, when it is Severian's turn he happens to be alone in elevation. The sword feels heavy, like a real sword and it encounters some surprise resistance in the downstroke as though it had to sever a vertebral column rather than just trip a device to release a wax head.

But of course, the Holy Katharine maid is okay afterwards. So perhaps this mock-beheading was a real one and the second (after Triskele) example of Severian's resurrection powers at work. The idea is that the real beheading was set up as a test of his power. (if the maid knew about this she is amazingly confident that Severian will succeed in resurrecting her "Strike and fear not!").

This theory is a little more shaky than some of the other ones I like, but I still like it. The woman in the grave is dead before Severian's elevation so I think there is at least one spare copy of Catherine available to step in after her death. (or maybe Severian's real mother never played Holy Katharine, only her clone. I dunno.)

Either way, I think Severian's mother was imprisoned in the Citadel, in a cell, nursing Severian as he remembers, and awaiting her sentence of strangulation. Maybe she played Holy Katharine for a while, maybe she didn't. But for some reason she escaped, using one of the towers near the Atrium of Time and ended up 60 years in the future. At the end of the story, Valeria sends her back to face her execution and the time she popped back out from the tower happened to be when our story begins. What the relationship between Valeria and Catherine is, I don't know. But it is something.

David Stockhoff — 25 Oct 2011, 13:48 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 10/25/2011 8:40 AM, Lee Berman wrote:

David Stockhoff:

This suggests Sev's mom was a favorite of the Old Autarch's. If so, this confirms for me that Sev only learned/suspected his maternity upon his ascension.

(1) He only suppresses his knowledge as he writes the Inn of Lost Loves scenes because he didn't know it at the time they occurred. He can't be accused of hiding it, just of not connecting the dots for his reader.

He's being delicate in the narrative because of Dorcas as well and has no wish to be cruel to his father. So he leaves the obvious unsaid, even for the reader.

(2) AFAICT, when Sev interrogates Ouen he is only interested in figuring out Dorcas. He already suspects that she is much older than she looks, and that Ouen is her son. He has no idea Ouen is his father. He only inquires about Catherine after he is told he resembles Ouen; he puts 2+2 together because the Old Autarch knows Catherine but not Ouen. Nor, presumably, did the Autarch know about Sev or of twins, or else Sev would know about any Severa. This confirms that the Autarch had no hand in any breeding project, but Inire may have.

Excellent insight in identifying Severian's motivation of going to Ouen as one of his first acts after becoming autarch (and acquiring the memories). And good catch in noting Contessa Carina as one of the autarch's favorites. All in all a great analysis!

I should note (if I didn't) that the Old Autarch would also know of Catherine's execution, assuming she was, as he would probably have been the one to judge her. I base this on hints that the Autarch judged all cases brought at court, including discussion in the audience at Talos' play.