

The jeweled Claw, the Story of the Black

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 20 May 1998

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Craig Christensen — 20 May 1998, 12:37

While reading through the archives I came across this February 1998 post from Christopher Culver

In `_Shadow_`, chapter XXXV, there is the tale of the woman who brings black beans from the stars. This woman threatens to cast them into the sea unless she were obeyed. The lords of the time "a hundred times more complete in their dominion than [the] Autarch...had her seized and torn to bits." This story seems, in my opinion, to show the planting of the black hole in the Old Sun. I think that the sea mentioned is not Ocean but rather Oroborus(sp?), which is outer space. The lords, I think, are the monarchs, >because they were more powerful and had a larger empire than those of the autarchy. Thus, the black hole was put into the sun because of the tyranny of the monarchs.

Who is this woman? The idea expressed by some on the list is that the Conciliator/New-Sun-himself put the black hole into the sun. But, if this story were true, it was not he, but rather a woman. Could it be Tzadkiel?

After all, she is one of great power who could do such a thing, and is of higher authority than men. But, I am not sure that she could be ripped apart.

This thought made brought to mind Severian's encounter with the small version of Tzadkiel in Urth, chapter XL, "The Brook Beyond Briah." She indicates that she is a fragment of the original Tzadkiel when she says, "...I'm a part of myself that was banished long ago, long before the first time you met me." Can anyone tell me what she was banished for?

On another subject, is the thorn that Severian gave to the chiliarch in Urth, chapter XXXIX, "The Claw of the Conciliator Again" the Claw that Agia robbed from the Pelerines? If so, when did it become encased in gem-stone?

And if I may ask one more question today, who is the woman being led away by Praetorians in Urth, chapter XLI, "Severian from his Cenotaph"? He observes her, and she him, shortly after Severian restores the dead assassin. She is familiar to him, but even with his perfect memory he can not recall from where or when he knows her. She is come and gone in less than a page, but you get the impression that she is an important character.