

Perelandra and Sevegetarianism

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 12 Jun 1998

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/771>

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Dan Parmenter — 12 Jun 1998, 15:33

From: Peter Westlake <peter at harlequin.co.uk>

All this underground stuff is quite evocative of Tolkien, and the underground parts of _Perelandra_, with its sense of inaccessible depths briefly glimpsed. The air striders reminded me a little of the spinning wheels in _Perelandra_ too.

I've been thinking of some other Perelandra parallels too. Specifically, I've noticed that in URTH, when Severian returns from Yesod he seems reluctant to eat meat. At one of the inns he is described as pushing the meat around rather than eating it (no citation, sorry) and he seems to mention preferring to eat fruit several times. I believe there's also the post-Typon sequence in the mountains when he's hanging out with the smilodon, munching on fruit. This isn't ironclad, but I can't help but see a parallel to Ransom's return from Perelandra, after which he eschews all but the most basic of human food. And of course by THAT HIDEOUS STRENGTH Ransom is being attended by dancing bears and mice that clean up the crumbs from his food, which is itself a parallel to Severian's seeming ability to gentle animals (the Smilodon, but also the bull at the end of CLAW) which I suppose is just part and parcel of his growing righteousness.

I'm inclined to think that in both cases perhaps there's some element of the "fairy cake" concept, after eating the food of Yesod or Perelandra, human food seems tasteless.

And let us not forget that Master Ash seemed to be a non meat-eater, which Severian noted. Interesting that neither Master Ash nor the Green Man eat meat (obviously for quite different reasons).

Re: manskin, doeskin, etc.

I was sort of obsessed by this for a while myself, particularly wrt the Claw's sack. And a few months ago, here on the list, I brought up the inconsistencies in Severian's descriptions of the old Autarch's robes. Usually they are referred to as yellow, but in citadel they are saffron (check the archives for the specifics). We discussed the significance of saffron robes in general but this discrepancy was still never really explained to my satisfaction. At one point I was convinced that the inconsistencies were due to parallel universes that happened to share some of the same reality space, but now that I have a better understanding of the "sliver Severians" concept I'm less sure about that.

Dan