

Little Severian, Things in Jars, and Martians

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 27 Jun 1998

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John Moar — 27 Jun 1998, 07:09

Thanks for the responses so far, although I'd still like some information on the homunculus.

As for my not 'getting' the Little Severian sequence: I originally read parts of tBotNS when I was far too young to understand it properly. I did, however, remember how Little Severian died.

This sequence is, IMO, one of the simplest uses of shock in tBotNS, not following the usual methods of foreshadowing or retrospective inevitability. Little Severian's death seems to be unusually timed, part-way between leaving him a bit-player and expanding him to a secondary character. So, when I reread this knowing when he would die, it fell flat.

BTW, do Big and Little Severian remind anyone else of Batman and Robin? <g>

On the subjects of the rats in the library. I was reminded of something in a story by Stanley G. Weinbaum. The story, Valley of Dreams, is the sequel to A Martian Odyssey. In this story, the Martian Tweel, upon entering a library, angrily chases away a ratlike creature which is attempting to read the books stored there. This story may be rare enough that this is nothing, but still...

James Moar

"...it represents for me all that monomaniacal fabric of argument, so tightly woven that not even the tiniest objection or spark of light can escape its net, in which human minds become enmeshed whenever the subject is one in which no appeal to fact is possible" - Sword, Ch. 38