

Quetzal & Pike & even Severian

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David_Lebling — 10 Apr 1997, 09:20

Lasrach,

Sometimes it reads as if the serpent has donned the shell of a human body (in fact, I don't see any other way since I don't consider Q a Shape-shifter) which he can discard and resume at will.

This is an interesting theory, but I don't see any evidence for it. In fact, we get continual clues about Q's appearance. His neck is unnaturally long and wrinkled, his profile is nearly noseless, his head sways from side to side, he is light but strong, and so on. There is also a description of him touching up his makeup (on the first page of _Calde_): "He had shaped and colored his face and neck with care upon arising..." Later, "he extracted the puff ... and applied flesh-toned powder delicately to the small, sharp chin he had shaped with such care upon arising."

I think what we're dealing with here is either someone who can literally shape his face (at least), like the Face Dancers in the _Dune_ series, or someone using putty, greasepaint, and powder. He may even do both.

As for Pike's "ghost," I've come to like the Aquastor Theory first proposed by alga (forgive me if I misattribute this). In fact, the more I think about it, the more I think that there is a possibility that the Pike aquastor, like the ones in _New Sun_, caused a major turning point in the past. Suppose that Quetzal was planning to attack Silk in the manteion, and in fact had in the "real" timeline, and Pike's appearance prevented that attack? This would make an interesting resonance with the life of the first Severian.

-vizcacha

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