

Call me Severian

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 05 Feb 1999

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Peter Stephenson — 05 Feb 1999, 11:10

Has anyone noticed the strange resemblance between the following? Are they perhaps related? (If anyone has, I should just look back in the archive for the same subject line, since it's the obvious one. But I haven't.)

Grand Championship for the Title `Great American Novel'

The Contenders

Moby Dick
The Book of the New Sun
Melville, Herman Wolfe, Gene

Location: C3, `The Spouter Inn', f. I.xv, `Baldanders'

Protagonist: One Ishmael Severian of the Torturers

Plot: I. needs a room for the night, finds inn, tries night, finds inn, tries to sleep on bench, is to sleep in chair, is offered bed to share with offered bed to share with unknown companion. unknown companion.

Bedfellow: One Queequeg Goodman Baldanders (+ friend)

Bedfellow's Andes, apparently The mountain range formerly Provenance known as Andes

Other Items One (1) Tomahawk One (1) Carneficial Sword in Bed:

Head: Q. collects and sells S. makes money as vertebral human heads. partitionist; all and sundry dreaming of severed heads.

Matters `Thar she blows!' S. dreams of falling into sea Arising: and seeing `great shapes --- things hundreds of times larger than a man'.

Pertinent Leviathan Abaia
Mythical
Creatures:

Still to `WHALING VOYAGE BY ONE Journey into exile by S. Come: ISHMAEL'

Future One Queequeg Goodman Baldanders (+ friend) Travelling Companions:

corncrake

Michael Straight — 05 Feb 1999, 08:53 · follows Peter Stephenson

On Fri, 5 Feb 1999, Peter Stephenson wrote:

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Now that you mention it, this scene did remind me when I read it of Moby Dick, at least as far as sharing a bed with a weirdo, but I'd forgotten about it. I didn't notice all the other parallels.

In other words, "me too."

-Rostrum