

Can it be?! It is! Another Batch of Infrequently Asked Questions

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 17 Jan 2000

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Talarican — 17 Jan 2000, 23:21

II: XXVI When Baldanders and Talos prepare to go their separate way from Severian, Dorcas, and the abandoned Jolenta, Sev argues with Dr. Talos to allow him a short time alone to attempt to heal Baldanders. Talos humorously retorts to Severian that Baldanders isn't ready to die yet. Sev replies that it is life, not death, he offers. Talos' sarcastic reply: "Where's your friend?". (- as in- I don't see your life-giving counterpart anywhere around?!)

At no point has Jonas, long since departed to Mirrorland, been mentioned. But later, Severian tells Dorcas that Talos was asking about Jonas.

Is Wolfe signalling us that Jonas is somehow to be considered "life" to Severian's "Death"? (Not Talos, as Talos probably wasn't intentionally referring to Jonas; indeed, he probably had forgotten the inquisitive stranger at the Piteous Gate. Not Severian, who connects this remark to Jonas only by failing to comprehend the doctor's sarcastic wit as such.) If so, what is the point?

V:XXXVII What's up with the _Alcyone_'s cook and her silence (except the one "please")? She looks at Declan "with a significance [Severian] did not understand" after he announces that they will speak to the magistrate on Sev 's behalf, and "meantime do what we can in other ways". What else did Declan intend to do (aborted in any case by Sev's summons to Typhon) and what was the significance of the cook and her glances?

I:XIII When Master Palaemon starts to explain to the newly disgraced Severian the terms of his exile, he mentions "_Twice_" before members of the guild have been dispatched to outlying towns, though whether those were such cases as this the chronicles do not say." (Emph. mine) Well of COURSE the chronicles do not say, Master, the point of all this is to sweep this scandal under the rug! Don't want an Inquisitor getting interested in matters mentioned in the chronicles, do we? And what a neat evasion on Palaemon's part. I suspect he knows all too well the circumstances of at least one of those two previous cases, right? But he said the chronicles do not say, not that he doesn't know! What happened in the _other_ case of a journeyman being sent forth from the Matachin Tower? Was he anyone we ever heard of?

III:XXXIII At Castle Baldanders, when Famulimus and Barbatus set Sev straight regarding their lifespan, Baldanders interjects with "These things live only a score of years, like dogs". His tone "told [Sev] more than is written here, for each word fell like a stone dropped down some deep cistern". Aside from the contempt obvious in B's choice of words, what did his tone convey to Severian?