

Bee Wrangler

The Urth list — 7 messages, 5 voices, 29 Aug 2006

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4704>

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Rex Lycanthrosaurus — 29 Aug 2006, 02:57

Found the one other bee-related quote I was looking for, and append it, if for nothing other than to answer Roy Lackey's question about what exactly it is Paeon teaches the penultimate autarch.

"The dead Autarch, whose face I had seen in scarlet ruin a few moments before, now lived again. My eyes and hands were his, I knew the work of the hives of the bees of the House Absolute and the sacredness of them, who steer by the sun and fetch gold of Urth's fertility. I knew his course to the Phoenix Throne, and to the stars, and back." (Citadel, Chapter XXIX)

Rex Lycanthrosaurus
lycanthrosaurus at fastmail.fm

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<http://www.fastmail.fm> - Same, same, but different

Roy C. Lackey — 30 Aug 2006, 04:09 · follows Rex Lycanthrosaurus

Rex Lycanthrosaurus quoted:

"The dead Autarch, whose face I had seen in scarlet ruin a few moments before, now lived again. My eyes and hands were his, I knew the work of the hives of the bees of the House Absolute and the sacredness of them, who steer by the sun and fetch gold of Urth's fertility. I knew his course to the Phoenix Throne, and to the stars, and back." (Citadel, Chapter XXIX)

Damn! I forgot that and should not have, particularly in this context.

Still, while the quote establishes a link between bees and the Old Autarch, that does not make him Sancha's Appian. If the Old Autarch had been a boy when he was trained, and went to Yesod as a relatively young man a quarter-century before Paeon told him about Sev, then he would not have been particularly old when he made his lament about not thinking his replacement would be "so soon". If, however, he had held the throne for more than sixty years at that point, his complaint would be unreasonable.

I think my earlier list of the last four rulers makes more sense, and better reconciles the apparent with the actual age of the Old Autarch. Lomer's and Nicarete's longevity can't be helped, no matter who was autarch when.

-Roy

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 30 Aug 2006, 05:05 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

Jumping in to be a pain in the ass.

On 8/29/06, Roy C. Lackey <rlackey at stic.net> wrote:
If the Old Autarch had been a boy

when he was trained, and went to Yesod as a relatively young man a quarter-century before Paeon told him about Sev, then he would not have been particularly old when he made his lament about not thinking his replacement would be "so soon".

It ain't necessarily so, Roy. In fact ... I think you've just pried open an important argument for the pro-Appian camp.

How long was the Predecessor gone?

More accurately: how much time passed for him, and how much time passed on Urth, between his departure and his return? We know that Severian's journey didn't take too much subjective time, but he returned years after his departure.

Such considerations make it plausible to me that the Autarch has reigned longer than it seems, looking at him, he could possibly have done.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes, writer, trainer, bon vivant

<http://www.livejournal.com/users/sturgeonslawyer>

"Shovels are essential to the fantasy genre.

However, they are primarily used by the authors rather than the characters." -- Stephen R. Donaldson

Bob Miller — 30 Aug 2006, 11:53 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

While I personally find the Appian thing to be a matter of little interest, after looking at all the posts I'm no longer convinced I am right. I do believe that it may be a part of the "malleability and disconnectedness of time" that seems to be a major factor in so many of Wolfe's books. The vagueness deliberate and, perhaps, the answer not even something Wolfe believed relevant to his story and "fleshed out"?

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Roy C. Lackey — 30 Aug 2006, 19:59 · follows Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Dan'l wrote:

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There is not the least hint in the text that the Old Autarch was absent from Urth for any significant length of time, whether measured subjectively or objectively. Whether he was in his fifties or his eighties doesn't change the fact that 50 years before his death he was being trained by Paeon and messing with bees. And that was 12 years after Autarch Appian let Sancha move south. I seriously doubt that the Old Autarch was autarch when he first knew Paeon, or that he would be learning all about bees at least a dozen years after coming to the throne.

And Maruthas closing the roads when Palaemon was 25 still has to be accounted for.

-Roy

Tony Ellis — 30 Aug 2006, 23:27 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Dan'I wrote:

It ain't necessarily so, Roy. In fact ... I think you've just pried open an important argument for the pro-Appian camp.

Rex (<http://listserver.dreamhost.com/pipermail/urth-urth.net/2006-August/002622.html>) and Roy (<http://listserver.dreamhost.com/pipermail/urth-urth.net/2006-August/002629.html>) have already touched on this, I think.

How long was the Predecessor gone?

More accurately: how much time passed for him, and how much time passed on Urth, between his departure and his return? We know that Severian's journey didn't take too much subjective time, but he returned years after his departure.

Years **before**, surely?

In any case, as Roy says, the penultimate Autarch needn't have been gone any time at all. Why should Tzadkiel and co risk the Commonwealth falling to the armies of Erebus in his absence when they are masters of time travel, and can bring him back the day after he left?

My own problem with the old Autarch going to Yesod and coming back 20 years later or 20 years younger is that there's just no support for it in the text. If the old Autarch really has been in power for **at least** the last 62 years, why doesn't Severian comment on how implausibly youthful he looks?

If someone wants to argue that evidence isn't required, that this slight-of-time could have happened regardless of the fact that Wolfe doesn't say anything about it, I can just as easily argue the reverse. Who's to say the Autarch didn't come back from Yesod significantly older than when he left, as Gunnie says happen to some people who travel on the Ship?

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 30 Aug 2006, 23:42 · in reply to Tony Ellis

On 8/30/06, Tony Ellis <tonyellis69@btopenworld.com> wrote:
In any case, as Roy says, the penultimate Autarch needn't have

been gone any time at all.

No, you're quite right; he could have been gone from three seconds to three decades, or less, or more. But the point is not to argue that the Penult did skip a couple of decades; it's simply that he could have, and so his apparent age is not an overwhelming argument for his not being Appian, even if (as I believe) there's no life-extension technology available to the Commonwealth.

Why should Tzadkiel and co risk the Commonwealth falling to the armies of Erebus in his absence when they are masters of time travel, and can bring him back the day after he left?

I don't particularly see this as a risk -- not only is Father Inire perfectly capable of keeping things going without the Autarch, the Penult is a double agent for Erebus (via Vodalus) ... or something.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes, writer, trainer, bon vivant

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