

Sleeping Baldanders

The Urth list — 19 messages, 12 voices, 29 Dec 2008

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5294>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

Matt Teel — 29 Dec 2008, 12:13

I'm wondering about the short section in Chapter XV ("Baldanders"), in which Baldanders seems to be talking in his sleep. Severian is half awake and responding to what he thinks Baldanders is saying. Any thoughts on what's really going on there?

Baldanders says four things: (1) Never."? (2) "Baldanders."? (3) "You--strike off."? (4) "Tomorrow, then."

The scene is obviously meant to accomplish something, but I can't figure out what. Severian's answers simply recap things that have already been established, but I can't believe Wolfe just wanted to make sure we knew that Severian had been tossed out of the guild and is headed toward Thrax, or whatever. So, any ideas?

Matt Teel

brunians at brunians.org — 29 Dec 2008, 13:39 · in reply to Matt Teel

I'm wondering about the short section in Chapter XV ("Baldanders"), in which Baldanders seems to be talking in his sleep. Severian is half awake and responding to what he thinks Baldanders is saying. Any thoughts on what's really going on there?

Baldanders says four things: (1) Never."? (2) "Baldanders."? (3) "You--strike off."? (4) "Tomorrow, then."

The scene is obviously meant to accomplish something, but I can't figure out what. Severian's answers simply recap things that have already been established, but I can't believe Wolfe just wanted to make sure we knew that Severian had been tossed out of the guild and is headed toward Thrax, or whatever. So, any ideas?

He wanted to make sure we knew that Baldanders knew.

.

Dave Tallman — 29 Dec 2008, 13:42 · in reply to Matt Teel

Matt Teel wrote:

Baldanders says four things: (1) Never." (2) "Baldanders." (3) "You--strike off." (4) "Tomorrow, then."

My take is that Baldanders is only pretending to be talking in his sleep. He's playing his role as a dim-witted giant here, instead of the articulate genius he actually is.

Bruce Hayles — 29 Dec 2008, 17:17 · in reply to Dave Tallman

I'd assumed that the changes in Baldanders behavior were not an act but something caused by wildly fluctuating levels of hormones. Otherwise I cannot explain how Baldanders goes from enraged beast (when he charges the crowd and the cacogens have to burn him down) to

scientist (at his castle) to some sort of crazed child (when he fights Severian at his castle).

On Mon, Dec 29, 2008 at 8:42 AM, Dave Tallman <davetallman at msn.com> wrote:
Matt Teel wrote:

Baldanders says four things: (1) Never." (2) "Baldanders." (3)
"You--strike off." (4) "Tomorrow, then."

My take is that Baldanders is only pretending to be talking in his sleep.
He's playing his role as a dim-witted giant here, instead of the articulate
genius he actually is.

Son of Witz — 29 Dec 2008, 17:27 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

On Dec 29, 2008, at 5:39 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:
I'm wondering about the short section in Chapter XV ("Baldanders"),
in
which Baldanders seems to be talking in his sleep. Severian is
half awake
and responding to what he thinks Baldanders is saying. Any
thoughts on
what's really going on there?

Baldanders says four things: (1) Never." (2) "Baldanders." (3)
"You--strike off." (4) "Tomorrow, then."

The scene is obviously meant to accomplish something, but I can't
figure
out what. Severian's answers simply recap things that have already
been
established, but I can't believe Wolfe just wanted to make sure we
knew
that Severian had been tossed out of the guild and is headed toward
Thrax,
or whatever. So, any ideas?

He wanted to make sure we knew that Baldanders knew.

Knew that he was the New Sun to be?

something like
(you, the New Sun) "Never"
(the New Sun will be) "Baldanders"
"You--strike off." (Get the hell out of here)
"Tomorrow, then." (we will dispute this another day)

something like that?

~witz

Matt Teel — 29 Dec 2008, 19:12 · follows Son of Witz

Hm, now that is interesting, Witz. Maybe if we combine this with Bruce's observation that
Baldanders' hormones may be playing with his personality, and Dave's observation that he's

only pretending to be asleep and is actually awake, we may get at the root of this enigmatic little scene.

Matt

--- On Mon, 12/29/08, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

From: Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>

Subject: Re: (urth) Sleeping Baldanders

To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>

Date: Monday, December 29, 2008, 5:27 PM

On Dec 29, 2008, at 5:39 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

I'm wondering about the short section in Chapter XV

("Baldanders"), in

which Baldanders seems to be talking in his sleep. Severian is half awake

and responding to what he thinks Baldanders is saying. Any thoughts on

what's really going on there?

Baldanders says four things: (1) Never." (2)

"Baldanders." (3)

"You--strike off." (4) "Tomorrow, then."

The scene is obviously meant to accomplish something, but I can't figure

out what. Severian's answers simply recap things that have already been

established, but I can't believe Wolfe just wanted to make sure we knew

that Severian had been tossed out of the guild and is headed toward Thrax,

or whatever. So, any ideas?

He wanted to make sure we knew that Baldanders knew.

Knew that he was the New Sun to be?

something like

(you, the New Sun) "Never"

(the New Sun will be) "Baldanders"

"You--strike off." (Get the hell out of here)

"Tomorrow, then." (we will dispute this another day)

something like that?

~witz

Craig Brewer — 29 Dec 2008, 19:35 · in reply to Matt Teel

Not sure about the rest, but I assume that "You -- strike off" has to do with Severian "striking off" peoples' heads.

Hm, now that is interesting, Witz. Maybe if we combine this with Bruce's observation that Baldanders' hormones may be playing with his personality, and Dave's observation that he's

only pretending to be asleep and is actually awake, we may get at the root of this enigmatic little scene.

Matt

--- On Mon, 12/29/08, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

From: Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>

Subject: Re: (urth) Sleeping Baldanders

To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>

Date: Monday, December 29, 2008, 5:27 PM

On Dec 29, 2008, at 5:39 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

I'm wondering about the short section in Chapter XV

("Baldanders"), in

which Baldanders seems to be talking in his sleep. Severian is half awake

and responding to what he thinks Baldanders is saying. Any thoughts on

what's really going on there?

Baldanders says four things: (1) Never." (2)

"Baldanders." (3)

"You--strike off." (4) "Tomorrow, then."

The scene is obviously meant to accomplish something, but I can't figure

out what. Severian's answers simply recap things that have already been

established, but I can't believe Wolfe just wanted to make sure we knew

that Severian had been tossed out of the guild and is headed toward Thrax,

or whatever. So, any ideas?

He wanted to make sure we knew that Baldanders knew.

Knew that he was the New Sun to be?

something like

(you, the New Sun) "Never"

(the New Sun will be) "Baldanders"

"You--strike off." (Get the hell out of here)

"Tomorrow, then." (we will dispute this another day)

something like that?

~witz

Bruce Hayles — 29 Dec 2008, 20:46 · in reply to Craig Brewer

Craig, that was exactly my understanding of it too. I don't have the book with me, but I remember Severian saying something that indicates that that is also his interpretation.

On Mon, Dec 29, 2008 at 2:35 PM, Craig Brewer <cnbrewer at yahoo.com> wrote:

Not sure about the rest, but I assume that "You -- strike off" has to do with Severian "striking off" peoples' heads.

From: Matt Teel <adeodatus43 at yahoo.com>
To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>
Sent: Monday, December 29, 2008 1:12:06 PM

Subject: Re: (urth) Sleeping Baldanders

Hm, now that is interesting, Witz. Maybe if we combine this with Bruce's observation that Baldanders' hormones may be playing with his personality, and Dave's observation that he's only pretending to be asleep and is actually awake, we may get at the root of this enigmatic little scene.

Matt

--- On *Mon, 12/29/08, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>* wrote:

From: Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>
Subject: Re: (urth) Sleeping Baldanders
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>
Date: Monday, December 29, 2008, 5:27 PM

On Dec 29, 2008, at 5:39 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

I'm wondering about the short section in Chapter XV
("Baldanders"), in
which Baldanders seems to be talking in his sleep. Severian is half
awake
and responding to what he thinks Baldanders is saying. Any thoughts
on
what's really going on there?

Baldanders says four things: (1) Never." (2)

"Baldanders." (3)

"You--strike off." (4) "Tomorrow, then."

The scene is obviously meant to accomplish something, but I can't
figure
out what. Severian's answers
simply recap things that have
already been
established, but I can't believe Wolfe just wanted to make sure we
knew
that Severian had been tossed out of the guild and is headed toward
Thrax,
or whatever. So, any ideas?

He wanted to make sure we knew that Baldanders knew.

Knew that he was the New Sun to be?

something like
(you, the New Sun) "Never"
(the New Sun will be) "Baldanders"
"You--strike off." (Get the hell out of here)
"Tomorrow, then." (we will dispute this another day)

something like that?

~witz

Paul B — 29 Dec 2008, 21:48 · in reply to Bruce Hayles

I haven't kept track or anything, but I'd be willing to entertain the notion that Severian is wrong more than half of the time in his interpretations of events. The issue of Baldanders' inconsistent behavior could also be explained (as I explained it to myself) by "incredible hulk" syndrome. When he gets upset (as when he charged the audience or fought Severian) he flies into a rage, but is analytical otherwise.

Paul

On Mon, Dec 29, 2008 at 3:46 PM, Bruce Hayles <brucehayles at gmail.com> wrote:
Craig, that was exactly my understanding of it too. I don't have the book with me, but I remember Severian saying something that indicates that that is also his interpretation.

On Mon, Dec 29, 2008 at 2:35 PM, Craig Brewer <cnbrewer at yahoo.com> wrote:

Not sure about the rest, but I assume that "You -- strike off" has to do with Severian "striking off" peoples' heads.

From: Matt Teel <adeodatus43 at yahoo.com>
To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>
Sent: Monday, December 29, 2008 1:12:06 PM

Subject: Re: (urth) Sleeping Baldanders

Hm, now that is interesting, Witz. Maybe if we combine this with Bruce's observation that Baldanders' hormones may be playing with his personality, and Dave's observation that he's only pretending to be asleep and is actually awake, we may get at the root of this enigmatic little scene.

Matt

--- On *Mon, 12/29/08, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>* wrote:

From: Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>
Subject: Re: (urth) Sleeping Baldanders
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>
Date: Monday, December 29, 2008, 5:27 PM

On Dec 29, 2008, at 5:39 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

I'm wondering about the short section in Chapter XV ("Baldanders"), in which Baldanders seems to be talking in his sleep. Severian is half awake and responding to what he thinks Baldanders is saying. Any thoughts on what's really going on there?

Baldanders says four things: (1) Never." (2)

"Baldanders." (3)

"You--strike off." (4) "Tomorrow, then."

The scene is obviously meant to accomplish something, but I can't figure out what. Severian's answers simply recap things that have already been established, but I can't believe Wolfe just wanted to make sure we knew that Severian had been tossed out of the guild and is headed toward Thrax, or whatever. So, any ideas?

He wanted to make sure we knew that Baldanders knew.

Knew that he was the New Sun to be?

something like
(you, the New Sun) "Never"

(the New Sun will be) "Baldanders"
"You--strike off." (Get the hell out of here)
"Tomorrow, then." (we will dispute this another day)

something like that?

~witz

David Duffy — 29 Dec 2008, 22:00 · in reply to Paul B

Various interpretation of the significance of Able's surname have been posted, but I hadn't previously herd of _Maudine Ormsby_

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maudine_Ormsby

Cheers, David Duffy.

Son of Witz — 30 Dec 2008, 00:00 · in reply to Paul B

,
I had the same thought about striking off heads, then checked the book. Severian interprets Baldanders this way. but as Paul points out Severian is often pretty off base. I think Wolfe does this as misdirection. we get a sort of decent 'explanation' for one of the four statements, but if he's referring to his headsman role, "You--strike off." would end with a question mark. no?

On Dec 29, 2008, at 1:48 PM, Paul B wrote:

I haven't kept track or anything, but I'd be willing to entertain the notion that Severian is wrong more than half of the time in his interpretations of events.

The issue of Baldanders' inconsistent behavior could also be explained (as I explained it to myself) by "incredible hulk" syndrome. When he gets upset (as when he charged the audience or fought Severian) he flies into a rage, but is analytical otherwise.

Paul

On Mon, Dec 29, 2008 at 3:46 PM, Bruce Hayles
<brucehayles at gmail.com> wrote:

Craig, that was exactly my understanding of it too. I don't have the book with me, but I remember Severian saying something that indicates that that is also his interpretation.

On Mon, Dec 29, 2008 at 2:35 PM, Craig Brewer <cnbrewer at yahoo.com>
wrote:

Not sure about the rest, but I assume that "You -- strike off" has to do with Severian "striking off" peoples' heads.

From: Matt Teel <adeodatus43 at yahoo.com>

To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>

Sent: Monday, December 29, 2008 1:12:06 PM

Subject: Re: (urth) Sleeping Baldanders

Hm, now that is interesting, Witz. Maybe if we combine this with Bruce's observation that Baldanders' hormones may be playing with his personality, and Dave's observation that he's only pretending to be asleep and is actually awake, we may get at the root of this enigmatic little scene.

Matt

--- On Mon, 12/29/08, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

From: Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>

Subject: Re: (urth) Sleeping Baldanders

To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>

Date: Monday, December 29, 2008, 5:27 PM

On Dec 29, 2008, at 5:39 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

I'm wondering about the short section in Chapter XV ("Baldanders"), in which Baldanders seems to be talking in his sleep. Severian is half awake and responding to what he thinks Baldanders is saying. Any thoughts

on what's really going on there?

Baldanders says four things: (1) Never." (2)

"Baldanders." (3)

"You--strike off." (4) "Tomorrow, then."

The scene is obviously meant to accomplish something, but I can't figure out what. Severian's answers simply recap things that have already been

established, but I can't believe Wolfe just wanted to make sure we knew
that Severian had been tossed out of the guild and is headed toward

Thrax,
or whatever. So, any ideas?

He wanted to make sure we knew that Baldanders knew.

Knew that he was the New Sun to be?

something like
(you, the New Sun) "Never"

(the New Sun will be) "Baldanders"
"You--strike off." (Get the hell out of here)
"Tomorrow, then." (we will dispute this another day)

something like that?

~witz

Paul B — 30 Dec 2008, 01:37 · in reply to Son of Witz

Incidentally, "strike off" can also mean "get going", as in "to strike off on one's own". Perhaps Baldanders is just telling Severian to leave him.

Paul

On Mon, Dec 29, 2008 at 7:00 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:
,I had the same thought about striking off heads, then checked the book.
Severian interprets Baldanders this way.
but as Paul points out Severian is often pretty off base. I think Wolfe
does this as misdirection. we get a sort of decent 'explanation' for one of
the four statements, but if he's referring to his headsman role,
"You--strike off." would end with a question mark. no?

Matthew Groves — 30 Dec 2008, 02:00 · in reply to Son of Witz

This scene reminds me of Moby Dick, where Ishmael has to sleep next to Queequeg at the inn. Looking back at Moby Dick, I feel sure Wolfe is referring to Melville here. Melville makes reference several times to a counterpane in Chs. 3 and 4, and Severian writes that before going to bed, "I took of my cloak and spread it on the worn counterpane."

I think the bit about striking off is a bit of picaresque humor in the vane of, say, Moby Dick, but it is a mystery to me what Baldanders means about "Never," unless they have something to do with the spooky dreams he reports having had.

OT: Has anyone ever read John Myers Myers's *Silverlock*? Recommend it?

On Mon, Dec 29, 2008 at 6:00 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:
I had the same thought about striking off heads, then checked the book.
Severian interprets Baldanders this way.
but as Paul points out Severian is often pretty off base. I think Wolfe
does this as misdirection. we get a sort of decent 'explanation' for one of

the four statements, but if he's referring to his headsman role,
"You--strike off." would end with a question mark. no?

Tim Walters — 30 Dec 2008, 02:44 · in reply to Matthew Groves

OT: Has anyone ever read John Myers Myers's *Silverlock*? Recommend it?

Yes to the first, maybe to the second--I love it, and re-read it regularly, but it's easy to imagine someone not liking its mannered and somewhat goofy style. If you like other wise-cracking, Saturday-Evening-Post-ish fantasies of its (rough) period (e.g., _The Circus of Dr. Lao_, _Jurgen_, _Messer Marco Polo_, _The Night-Life of the Gods_, _The Crock Of Gold_, _Fancies And Goodnights_) you should read it post-haste.

If not, it still might be worth a shot (since, unlike any of those books except _Jurgen_ and _F&G_, it transcends that sub-genre), but maybe it shouldn't top your want list.

Tim Walters | <http://doubtfulpalace.com>

Craig Brewer — 30 Dec 2008, 15:19 · in reply to Tim Walters

I enjoy it immensely, as well. But even if it's not your cup of tea, I've heard a majority of "new wave" writers often cite it as an early influence on them, even though it isn't "new wave," itself.

----- Original Message -----

From: Tim Walters <walters at doubtfulpalace.com>

To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>

Sent: Monday, December 29, 2008 8:44:29 PM

Subject: (urth) Silverlock

OT: Has anyone ever read John Myers Myers's *Silverlock*? Recommend it?

Yes to the first, maybe to the second--I love it, and re-read it regularly, but it's easy to imagine someone not liking its mannered and somewhat goofy style. If you like other wise-cracking, Saturday-Evening-Post-ish fantasies of its (rough) period (e.g., _The Circus of Dr. Lao_, _Jurgen_, _Messer Marco Polo_, _The Night-Life of the Gods_, _The Crock Of Gold_, _Fancies And Goodnights_) you should read it post-haste.

If not, it still might be worth a shot (since, unlike any of those books except _Jurgen_ and _F&G_, it transcends that sub-genre), but maybe it shouldn't top your want list.

Tim Walters | <http://doubtfulpalace.com>

David Stockhoff — 30 Dec 2008, 15:28 · follows Matthew Groves

I have always linked these 2 scenes in my mind, but never knew what to make of it Homage, perhaps.

Message: 2

Date: Mon, 29 Dec 2008 20:00:41 -0600

From: "Matthew Groves" <matthewalangroves at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Sleeping Baldanders

To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>

Message-ID:

<39ed084f0812291800j7ae2f9fetd825faf2bcd78293 at mail.gmail.com>

Content-Type: text/plain; charset="iso-8859-1"

This scene reminds me of Moby Dick, where Ishmael has to sleep next to Queequeg at the inn. Looking back at Moby Dick, I feel sure Wolfe is referring to Melville here. Melville makes reference several times to a counterpane in Chs. 3 and 4, and Severian writes that before going to bed, "I took of my cloak and spread it on the worn counterpane."

I think the bit about striking off is a bit of picaresque humor in the vane of, say, Moby Dick, but it is a mystery to me what Baldanders means about "Never," unless they have something to do with the spooky dreams he reports having had.

Craig Brewer — 30 Dec 2008, 15:38 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Severian as (less self-conscious) Ahab?

----- Original Message -----

From: David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net>

To: urth at lists.urth.net

Sent: Tuesday, December 30, 2008 9:28:08 AM

Subject: Re: (urth) Sleeping Baldanders

I have always linked these 2 scenes in my mind, but never knew what to make of it Homage, perhaps.

Message: 2

Date: Mon, 29 Dec 2008 20:00:41 -0600

From: "Matthew Groves" <matthewalangroves at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Sleeping Baldanders

Adam Thornton — 30 Dec 2008, 19:07 · in reply to Tim Walters

On Dec 29, 2008, at 8:44 PM, Tim Walters wrote:

OT: Has anyone ever read John Myers Myers's *Silverlock*?
Recommend it?

Yes to the first, maybe to the second--I love it, and re-read it regularly, but it's easy to imagine someone not liking its mannered and somewhat goofy style. If you like other wise-cracking, Saturday-Evening-Post-ish fantasies of its (rough) period (e.g., _The Circus of Dr. Lao_, _Jurgen_, _Messer Marco Polo_, _The Night-Life of the Gods_, _The Crock Of Gold_, _Fancies And Goodnights_) you should read it post-haste.

If not, it still might be worth a shot (since, unlike any of those books except _Jurgen_ and _F&G_, it transcends that sub-genre), but maybe it shouldn't top your want list.

FWIW, I dug it highly too. Admittedly, the roll-around-in-steaming- piles-of-allusions isn't as magical to me as it was in high school, and these days Jasper Fforde does that really well....but I too reread it every couple of years.

Adam

Matthew Groves — 30 Dec 2008, 19:12 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Yes, homage, I think. It might even be winkingly self-referential. Wolfe is laying his "cloak" -- TBotNS -- over the "worn counterpane" of Melville's Moby Dick.

On Tue, Dec 30, 2008 at 9:28 AM, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:

I have always linked these 2 scenes in my mind, but never knew what to make of it Homage, perhaps.

Message: 2

Date: Mon, 29 Dec 2008 20:00:41 -0600

From: "Matthew Groves" <matthewalangroves at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Sleeping Baldanders