

David as Maitre 2

The Urth list — 3 messages, 2 voices, 19 Jul 1998

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mary whalen — 19 Jul 1998, 23:39

This is Sean Whalen (prion).

I think that in The Fifth Head of Cerberus the junior officer who reviews VRT's case is actually David. First, David is known to have gone to the capital after his father's death, presumably to follow his love of political power. Plenty of time has passed since the murder and VRT's arrest for him to have attained such a position and to have held it for a fairly significant amount of time. Also, he is called a junior officer and the other officer he meets is called a brother officer. This is an allusion to the fact that David is younger than his "brother" No. 5. The other person the j.o. is mentioned in this story to be younger than is his slave, who is probably one of the clones or altered clones of Maitre. This seems to be plenty, in a Wolfe book, to link him to David. More, he is only addressed as Maitre, just like his father was, continuing the chain of linkage. The other officer also says that he always was a night owl, which is similar to the way that David and No. 5 stayed up when they were young in FHC. Also, when he hits the slave, it is like a reversal of when No. 5 accidentally stabbed him when he was fighting the other clone of Maitre with four arms.

prion

Robert Borski — 20 Jul 1998, 22:10 · follows mary whalen

Sean/prion:

It's kinda neat--your idea of David being Maitre #2, the junior officer who reviews VRT's case. I'm not sure I buy it--David's a wee bit on the spoiled side if you ask me, and does not seem so much interested in power as he does glitter and celebrity and the spoils of being rich. Witness, how in regards to killing Maitre and locating his treasure trove, "David talked about hunting in the grand style, and the political power money could buy." It also seems odd that he wouldn't remark upon or notice that the male slave looks exactly like his father and brother. (Unless subconsciously this is why he helps him escape the silk-mite factory...). Nor does he show any unusual reaction when he reads in the interviews how VRT deduces Maitre has been murdered. Also, if VRT is initially arrested on the suspicion of having murdered Maitre, is it likely even a corrupt French military tribunal would allow Maitre's own son to determine the alleged murderer's fate (especially since Marsch is thought to be Terran) and never have David mention the irony once? I'm also not sure the time element would allow David to rise in the ranks this fast, especially if he's bedridden with a major leg injury at the time of Maitre's murder.

But in the interests of open-mindedness, I also point out David plays a military man--a captain of the chasseurs--in the summer play he, # 5, Phaedria et al stage. And he does have sex with another possible abo (Cassilla), the same way his father did if Celestine Etienne indeed is an abo. So who knows? I've built theories on less.

Robert Borski

mary whalen — 20 Jul 1998, 21:56 · follows Robert Borski

This is Sean Whalen (prion).

---Robert Borski wrote:

Sean/prion:

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Yes, but why did David go to the capital? In the capital there would be the possibility of a government position, such as an intelligence officer. He has the education and intellect for such a position.

He is dreaming about how to spend the money he would get if Maitre died, but since he receives none when this occurs, he has to find another way to gain money, through the political power he dreams of rather than the other way around (I also remember one other point in the book when he's remarked to want political power or influence or something).

It also seems odd that he wouldn't remark upon or notice that the male slave looks exactly like his father and brother. (Unless subconsciously this is why he helps him escape the silk-mite factory...).

It isn't certain that he looks exactly like them, he may not be a simple clone. He could be Maitre's natural child or the child of one of an earlier version's clone, or any number of things. He may also just be older and more worn, sickly, thin, etc.

Remember also that David and No. 5 don't notice that Mr. Million has the same face as Maitre but at a different. The slave No. 5 meets at the market also doesn't notice that No. 5 resembles him so. Remember that everyone on Ste. Croix looks very similar, the probable result of the Gene Wolfe line's genealogical influence. There's no reason for him to really notice this or remark on it, and if he did it would be when he first met him, which scene is not seen in the book.

Nor does he show any unusual reaction when he reads in the interviews how VRT deduces Maitre has been murdered. Also, if VRT is initially arrested on the suspicion of having murdered Maitre, is it likely even a corrupt French military tribunal would allow Maitre's own son to determine the alleged murderer's fate (especially since Marsch is thought to be Terran) and never have David mention the irony once?

We never see what he is thinking until the final part at all, so this reaction would not be mentioned. There's also no reason for him to react. He has already known for a long time at this

point that his father was murdered, and that No. 5 did it. Seeing that someone else charged with the same crime and arrested whom he knows deduces this shouldn't cause any startling. He also shows no outward reaction to much stranger or shocking parts of his reading either, even when he becomes sure that VRT replaced Marsch and may be an abo.

David doesn't mention the irony or anything else as he reads it. We hardly learn any of the thoughts that he has during the novella at all. It's not significant that this would be excluded when everything else is as well.

Remember, too, that the authorities could find no evidence that David was indeed Maitre's son and thus give him no inheritance. As far as the government is concerned in their records, he has no connection to him at all. The officer who sends him the case may not even know that David was raised by Maitre. This matters less now that they know that he didn't murder Maitre, and that he isn't really from Earth at all (they apparently figure that much out, at least, before sending the case).

I'm also not sure the time element would allow
David to rise in the ranks this fast, especially if he's bedridden
with a
major leg injury at the time of Maitre's murder.

It wouldn't take very much time at all for the leg to heal after the time of the murder. He appears to leave for the capital almost immediately after it is found that Maitre left no money that Jeannine could find. VRT is imprisoned for a significant amount of time at the time of his last writing (that we see). It's unknown how much time passed after that and when the case was photocopied and assembled. When it was finished, it was a year before the junior officer receives it (who knows what has been done with it in the meantime). This gives him at least around three years to obtain this position, and he is only a junior officer in an uncooled building who has to review long assignments overnight just to get ahead. David appears smart enough and educated enough to get this job, especially since when he first arrived he had at least some money. Who knows what connections Aunt Jeannine told him about that he could use to get to this position? Many people visit brothels.

prion