

Fifth Head miscellaney

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 20 Jul 1998

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mary whalen — 20 Jul 1998, 00:05

This is Sean Whalen (prion).

I just wanted to put down a few minor miscellaneous points I have in my mind about _The Fifth Head of Cerberus_.

Today I saw a show about Neanderthals. It seems that their flintworkers could make a blade that is the sharpest known to man, as could the later humans. The discussor said that it is even sharper than a modern surgeon's scalpel. Marsch talks about how flint can be chipped with little dexterity when he talks to RT speculating about how he could make the implements he sells as Annese with his arthritic hands. VRT probably used flint to cut out the first pages of Marsch's diary, which are said in the story to have been cut out with an instrument sharper than a scalpel.

VRT may have bought the brass circumciser to use on himself, so that he would not be discovered to be impersonating Marsch if his books were found. Did he ever get to use it? I don't know if anyone in authority ever saw him naked, and he asked not to be strip-searched by the men who arrest him.

Isn't it possible that VRT didn't kill Marsch, but that he was killed by the tire-tiger? In the journal, written by VRT, it says that Marsch was attacked by the waiting tiger when he came down from the tree, and that he should have been mauled but was absurdly lucky, and was only knocked back into a thorn bush. It seems to me that the tiger actually killed Marsch, and that VRT wrote that Marsch survived so that he could take his place. Otherwise, there's no reason to include this passage at all, as it seems ridiculous that Marsch could actually save himself if the tiger attacked as he came down the tree.

Again, I wonder if VRT actually killed the cat-girl or just wrote that so that he wouldn't have to write about her interactions with Marsch, which would have been very different from the interactions he had with her, and too difficult for him to make up. When he begins to write in the journal, he also talks about "we" a lot, apparently about him and the mules, but perhaps not.

I don't think that I believe Robert Borski's idea that RT is actually an abo himself. It seems odd that his wife and son have green eyes when he doesn't. VRT thinks he's a human, he says that what happens to his hands will keep him from his profession, implying that he had tool-using hands before. He can operate the buttons that his wife can't.

Also, I believe that there was some discussion about what VRT and Maitre believe about Jeannine's genetic relations when VRT says that she is the daughter of "shall we say an earlier 'version'" of No. 5. It seems possible that he meant a version as the parent of the Gene Wolfe genome, rather than an earlier person in the line of clones. However, in jail VRT says that Jeannine is genetically Gene's daughter. At that time, remember, VRT didn't know that No. 5

knew he was a clone, and was thus just being subtle.

prion