

Cherryh Jubilee?

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 11 Feb 2001

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Nigel Price — 11 Feb 2001, 23:01

Marc Aramini asks some interesting questions about the GW short story "Cherry Jubilee" and its possible connections with a Russian novel called "Red Star" by an author called Bogdanov.

Sorry, Marc, I can't answer your questions directly, but I do remember being convinced when I read "Cherry Jubilee" that GW was having some gentle fun at the expense of the SF author C J Cherryh, who in real life, of course, spells her name surname "Cherry". In particular, I thought that he was pastiching the themes found in her Hugo-winning novel "Cyteen".

"Cyteen" is, amongst other things, a highly convoluted murder mystery, set on a planet colonized by humans of Russian and French descent. The heroine of the second part of the novel is the clone of the victim in the first part.

Now, I'm not saying that the parallels are close, but we have the name "Cherry", the murder mystery, the Russian names, and the highly significant clone. My guess is that Wolfe found it amusing to juggle with these themes in a short story in which the name of the author being pastiched was itself a significant item. The tribute is disguised, but at the same time perfectly open and obvious - "hidden in plain sight", as Poe would have said.

Incidentally, Wolfe refers to C J Cherryh as "the Duchess of Oklahoma" in his essay "The Ethos of Elfland", which is included in the collection "Castle of Days". I think that that was intended as a compliment!

I always meant to post this message on the Urth list and on cherryhlist at the same time, to which I also used to subscribe, so that I could, as it were, kill two birds with one stone, but I never got round to it. Marc's enquiry reminded me of my omission, so here you are...

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