

Out of the office (was Re: Digest from urth@urth.net)

The Urth list — 9 messages, 1 voices, 03 Sep 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3435>

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Ian Lamont — 03 Sep 2002, 12:59

At 07:56 PM 8/23/02 -0400, you wrote:
Message-ID: <000901c24a69\$721697e0\$5ef9c518@robertbo>
From: "Robert Borski" <rborski at charter.net>
To: <urth at urth.net>
Subject: Re: (urth) The Coldhouse Prank
Date: Fri, 23 Aug 2002 00:53:35 -0500
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Stone Ox writes:

Robert Borski argues quite eloquently that Ted Singer's father is the victim in the coldhouse prank. I don't think this can be right, because the victim lived in a boarding house, was locked in on Friday, and nobody noticed he was missing until he was discovered on Monday. If the victim had had a wife or girlfriend, surely he would have been discovered sooner.

But look who imparts this information about the weekend tragedy and the boarding house connection: Dan French, who, not having been a factory employee at the time, is simply repeating the sanitized version of the story as it's been spun down through the years and perhaps even through semi-official channels, since there's been a coverup. (I do, however, and for obvious reasons, like the notion that the victim died on Friday.) He doesn't remember the name of the victim and is completely unaware there is an even more sinister side to the entire episode, with a lone person being responsible for the victim's death. As Den also reminds us earlier, such stories have a way of becoming "both faded and embroidered by time," which results in a further blurring of the details. And lastly when Dan French tells the story of the sidhe, it deviates from the traditional in several respects.

In other words I think there's plenty of reason to doubt his version of the story.

Robert Borski

--

From: matthew.malthouse at guardian.co.uk
To: urth at urth.net
Message-ID: <80256C1E.004D99D7.00 at ldnmta01.guardian.co.uk>
Date: Fri, 23 Aug 2002 14:42:15 +0100
Subject: Re: (urth) PEACE: 3 Misses
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

On 20/08/2002 06:08:34 Roy C. Lackey wrote:

I can make nothing of "Tyler".

Not having read Peace I have no idea if there's any relevance but the word can mean door or gate keeper. Archaic and obsolete except in Masonic Lodges where the additional meaning of keeping out the uninitiated applies and Tyler is a formal position. To tyle the lodge; bar the doors assured that only the aurtherised are within.

The more prosaic meaning being a tiler, one who makes, provides or lays (roof) tiles. The "i" spelling is prfered to the "y" after about 1670 although the "y" remains more common as a name.

From that a cat that frequents roofs. A sneak-thief or burglar.

Obscurly; also a c17 shoplifter.

Is that of any help?

Matthew

--

I am on vacation during the last week of August. I will get back to you after I return on Labor Day.

Thanks,

Ian Lamont
Assistant Web Site Manager
Harvard Alumni Affairs and Development Office
124 Mount Auburn Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
Tel: (617) 495-8183
Fax: (617) 495-0521

Ian Lamont — 03 Sep 2002, 12:59 · follows Ian Lamont

At 07:57 PM 8/26/02 -0400, you wrote:
Message-ID: <004801c24cb7\$be21af80\$1f3dc6d8 at rclackey.stic.net>
From: "Roy C. Lackey" <rclackey at stic.net>

To: <urth at urth.net>
Subject: Re: (urth) PEACE: 3 Misses
Date: Sun, 25 Aug 2002 23:19:04 -0500
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Matthew responding to me:

I can make nothing of "Tyler".

Not having read Peace I have no idea if there's any relevance but the word can mean door or gate keeper. Archaic and obsolete except in Masonic Lodges where the additional meaning of keeping out the uninitiated applies and Tyler is a formal position. To tyle the lodge; bar the doors assured that only the authorised are within.

So, Helen Birkhead Tyler yields . . .

torch + shininghead (?) + gate keeper(?)

flame-topped gate keeper?

Like the cherubim with flaming swords at the gates of Eden, guarding the way to the tree of life?

-Roy

--

Message-ID: <14C3784DB7932F458F3A929D779546400235D648 at smtexmb02.siebel.com>
From: "Dan'I Danehy-Oakes" <ddanehy at siebel.com>
To: "'urth at urth.net'" <urth at urth.net>
Subject: (urth) Coldhouse Banshee
Date: Mon, 26 Aug 2002 09:27:00 -0700
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset=iso-8859-1
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Good heavens ... Stone Ox has brought up a marvellous correspondence, and then missed something that ... well, I guess it isn't obvious because I never saw it before either, but somehow it jumped out of his posting at me:

Jack stays in the barn haunted by the banshee three nights.

...as does the coldhouse prank victim (Friday, Saturday, Sunday nights).

Okay, then: making the banshee story as abstract as possible... J wants very badly a treasure in F's possession. F dislikes / looks down on J / regards J as a poor recipient for the treasure, but for some reason does not give an outright "No." Instead, he sets J to spend three nights in a place which should kill him.

Now, one of the things the embedded stories in PEACE seem to do is to provide better or happier endings to some of the situations in Weer's

life. So I am moved to speculate that the Coldhouse Prank was not a prank at all, but a deliberate attempt to keep a "real world" (Weer's reality) J from acquiring something that a "real world" F did not want him to have but could not deny him.

To those for whom the book is fresher in their minds than it is in mine, then: Do any possible real-world F's and J's come to mind? The most obvious candidate for F would be Julius, who owns the barn / coldhouse... is this even plausible? And if so, who would be J?

(Is this another candidate for when Den "really" died?)

--Blattid

--

Message-Id: <v03130302b9901add4af9@[209.179.251.152]>
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
Date: Mon, 26 Aug 2002 10:59:19 -0700
To: urth at urth.net
From: Michael Andre-Driussi <mantis at siriusfiction.com>
Subject: (urth) Coldhouse Den-die
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Blattid, regarding the coldhouse prank death, wrote:

(Is this another candidate for when Den "really" died?)

Well, er, yes and no.

If Weer is lying about his age at the time (invalidating the big anchor for the current operating timeline), then the coldhouse death could be his own, just as he might be a dead boy next to his chemistry set.

(And he would lie about his age ostensibly to distance himself from the prank if he was the perpetrator, too. In addition to lying about his age to avoid facing the fact that he himself died there.)

But if Weer is not lying about his age, and the victim's details are true, then no, the death cannot be Weer's.

=mantis=

--

Message-ID: <14C3784DB7932F458F3A929D779546400235D64E at smtexmb02.siebel.com>
From: "Dan'l Danehy-Oakes" <ddanehy at siebel.com>
To: "'urth at urth.net'" <urth at urth.net>
Subject: RE: (urth) Coldhouse Den-die
Date: Mon, 26 Aug 2002 11:23:21 -0700
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset=iso-8859-1
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Blattid, regarding the coldhouse prank death, wrote:

(Is this another candidate for when Den "really" died?)

Well, er, yes and no.

If Weer is lying about his age at the time (invalidating the big anchor for the current operating timeline), then the coldhouse death could be his own, just as he might be a dead boy next to his chemistry set.

Which was in fact my point ... This is just a goof, really, but it's a stfnal idea that I've played with many time and never come up with a good storyline for ... I've often had the idea of, well, if you can have multiple-sheaf futures, why not multiple-sheaf pasts? And then what if Alden, the Reasonably Friendly Ghost, actually has lived multiple versions of his life and died at several different points along the timeline ... — It would certainly clear up (by making irrelevant) many of the inconsistencies in the storyline(s). So he died of a stroke, and he died playing with his chemistry set, and he died in the coldhouse prank ... Just a goof, as I said.

But I'm dead serious about the coldhouse == the barn.

--Blattid

--

Date: Mon, 26 Aug 2002 18:27:21 +0000 (GMT)
From: Josh Geller <dclxvi at dclxvi.best.vwh.net>
To: urth at urth.net
Subject: (urth) The Devil In A Forest and St. Olaf of Norway
Message-ID: <Pine.BSF.4.40.0208261815230.8590-100000 at dclxvi.best.vwh.net>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

The Devil In A Forest is perhaps a minor work, but an extremely interesting one.

There's a hamlet in the woods, the woodcutters who are relics of a previous stage of civilization, a bandit who is a woodcutter aristocrat, a witch who knows the technology of the old civilization, megalithic ruins that are 'not a town' etc.

This is one of the most valuable books for people trying to understand the old civilization of Europe.

There's a story about King Olaf the Holy of Norway. See, it was generally known that he was a reincarnation of Olaf Geirstadtalf, who was buried in the mound at Geirstadt. There had been a prophecy to the effect, he had Olaf G.'s sword that came out of the mound etc. The problem was that St. Olaf was occupied with the forcible Christianization of Norway, and it sort of looked bad that a Christian king should be an incarnate elf. So they did a little stage play, where the King and some of his companions (who would also have been out of the mound, by the old way) went to Olaf G.'s mound on horseback and one of the companions asked the King if he didn't remember when they had been there before, and St. Olaf answered

that it was not possible for a person to live more than once, because you lived once, died once and were resurrected once on the Last Day. Then he was overcome with emotion and rode away, because (in my view) what he was saying was so much at conflict with the reality.

Wolfe has a good grasp on all of this, as he shows in 'Devil' and also in the Latro books.

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--

I am on vacation during the last week of August. I will get back to you after I return on Labor Day.

Thanks,

Ian Lamont
Assistant Web Site Manager
Harvard Alumni Affairs and Development Office
124 Mount Auburn Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
Tel: (617) 495-8183
Fax: (617) 495-0521

Ian Lamont — 03 Sep 2002, 12:59 · follows Ian Lamont

At 07:57 PM 9/1/02 -0400, you wrote:
Message-ID: <013101c25166\$e9aa2070\$d5456c42@akt>
From: "Alice K. Turner" <aturner6 at nyc.rr.com>
To: <urth at urth.net>
Subject: Re: FW: (urth) FW: Elucidations of the Long Sun:Hyacinth
Date: Sat, 31 Aug 2002 23:23:06 -0400

MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

hartshorn,

Yes, they (discussions, not discussers, necessarily--it remains to be seen) are this loony. Help us back to some semblance of sanity.

Is it really possible that all the discussions on this list have been this loony, and it is only now I come back after some time away that I am able to judge them properly? :-)

-alga

--

Message-ID: <20020901084122.65286.qmail at web40307.mail.yahoo.com>
Date: Sun, 1 Sep 2002 09:41:22 +0100 (BST)
From: Nicholas Gevers <vermouliau at yahoo.com>
Subject: (urth) Newt's main referent
To: urth at urth.net
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=iso-8859-1
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 8bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Considering when EXODUS FROM THE LONG SUN was being written (1994-5), Councillor Newt has a pretty obvious real-life referent: Newt Gingrich, elected Speaker of the US House of Representatives after the unexpected Republican congressional election victories of November 1994. From what we see of Newt, the resemblance is pretty profound...

--Nick Gevers.

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from News and Sport to Email and Music Charts
<http://uk.my.yahoo.com>

--

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Thanks,

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Ian Lamont — 03 Sep 2002, 12:59 · follows Ian Lamont

At 07:57 PM 8/25/02 -0400, you wrote:
From: StoneOx17 at aol.com
Message-ID: <122.160adf50.2a9a3b34 at aol.com>
Date: Sun, 25 Aug 2002 09:52:52 EDT
Subject: (urth) PEACE: the tale of the banshee
To: urth at urth.net
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="US-ASCII"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Hello,

Despite all the effort spent analyzing many of the embedded stories in Peace, there seems to have been relatively little written in this forum about the banshee story. I think that the participants in this story can be identified with some of the main characters in Peace, and that this story answers the question of "what went wrong?" with Wolfe's relationship to Margaret. Roy Lackey gave much of the same answer to this question already, without relying on the hints hidden in the banshee tale, in <http://www.urth.net/urth/archives/v0030/0104.html> but the banshee story fills in a few more of the details.

My identification in the story is:
Den Weer is Jack,
Margaret Lorn is Molly,
Carl Lorn is Molly's father,
Julian Smart is the banshee.

Let's review the banshee story.

Molly's father owns a big farm and Molly is his only child, so whoever marries her inherits the farm. Jack and Molly are in love, but Molly's father doesn't want Molly to marry Jack, "because Jack had nothing to bring to the wedding but his own two hands and a smile."

In the "what went wrong?" speech, Weer says "I was intelligent and industrious; Margaret and I loved one another deeply." But when he comes back from college, the Depression has wiped out all of his fortune and made jobs very hard to find. How is he to make a living?

One possibility would be for Weer to marry Margaret and move to the Lorn's farm. The Lorns likely still have their farm, since they wouldn't have had large bank loans, because the farm has been in their family for years and Carl Lorn is naturally frugal. Even though the income from the farm has been greatly reduced, they can at least grow enough food to feed themselves. It would be reasonable for Weer to help on the farm if he is to marry Margaret; she is the Lorn's only child, and so will inherit the farm. Later in the book, the farmer delivering potatoes to the factory says "When I was a boy, there wasn't anything anybody could have that was better'n a farm. If a

doctor or a banker could marry a widow that had a good one, they'd stop what they was doing and work it." This farmer is ten or twenty years older than Weer, but taking this and the banshee story together, I conclude that when Weer was about to graduate, he and Margaret proposed that they get married and that Den move out to the farm and help work it.

From the banshee story, we see that Carl Lorn didn't want Weer to marry Margaret. He disapproved of selling the egg, and he's tight with money ("only Daddy never gets nothing at the store if he can find something else that'll do") so Weer has two strikes against him, being Olivia's nephew and being penniless. In the banshee story, Molly's father tells Jack he'd have to spend the whole night in the barn haunted by the banshee and not be thrown out; in Weer's real life, Carl probably told Weer that he wouldn't let Margaret marry him unless he could support her. So Weer has to take the job at the factory (the real-life parallel of the barn); unfortunately, the coldhouse prank kills somebody, and Julius blackmails him into staying at the factory until Julius dies. In this scenario, it doesn't even matter whether Margaret knows about the coldhouse prank. Weer can't marry her unless he finds another job which pays better, and he can't leave this job because of Julius' blackmail. Eventually, Margaret gets fed up with Weer's inaction and marries Mr. Price (whom we suspect, from his surname, has sufficient money).

There are some interesting differences between the banshees in Peace and the banshees in Irish folklore. Looking on the web, it seems that in Irish folklore, the banshee is a woman *sidhe* who wails before somebody is going to die (and most important families have an associated banshee that predicts deaths in that family). In some versions of the legend, if you catch the banshee, she has to tell you who is going to die. However, she only foretells deaths, unlike Wolfe's banshee, who causes them. Note that Wolfe is playing off the folklore banshee: when his banshee is caught, she does tell Jack "who's to be born," although one might suspect that she's lying out of spite.

Wolfe's banshees are ghosts (quite fittingly for Peace) who are "the spirits of midwives that have killed the baby because someone gave gold to them to do it that it might not inherit." This gives grounds for identifying the banshee as Julius: in

<http://urth.net/urth/archives/v0205/1043.txt.shtml>,

I speculated that Julius may have killed Mr. Tilly so as to inherit the carny business, which, while not an exact parallel, is certainly similar.

Jack stays in the barn haunted by the banshee three nights. The first two times, the banshee forces him to speak the name of someone whom she later kills, first "the meanest man [Jack] can think of, a man that robbed everybody and never gave poor folk a penny," and second, "a real old lady that was goin' to die anyway." The third time, he defeats the banshee. If we identify the banshee with Julius, this is reminiscent of Weer's comment that he recalls uncle Julius clearly "only at three stages of his life." The

first stage is when Julius tells the story of Mr. Tilly. The second stage is at aunt Olivia's funeral. And the last is when Julius is an old man and the president. This seems a little strange, because Den lived with Julius for quite a while, and this period doesn't seem included in either of these stages. However, if we take these three stages as corresponding to the three nights in the banshee story, then we are led to suspect that Julius killed both Mr. Tilly and Olivia for their inheritances. We know (since Wolfe has confirmed it) that it was Peacock who actually ran Olivia over in his car, but there are at least two reasons to suspect that Peacock might have conspired with Julius: first, Julius Smart and Professor Peacock were good friends, and second, there's the mysterious letter from Peacock to Julius that Weer is unable to read.

Is there any more evidence for this correspondence between the banshee story and Weer's life? In the other stories in Peace that we know have parallels (the princess and her suitors, and the marid), there is a correspondence hidden in the characters' names. The link from Molly to Mary to Margaret seems obvious, but I don't see how to get from Jack to Den. Any ideas?

- Stone Ox

--

I am on vacation during the last week of August. I will get back to you after I return on Labor Day.

Thanks,

Ian Lamont
Assistant Web Site Manager
Harvard Alumni Affairs and Development Office
124 Mount Auburn Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
Tel: (617) 495-8183
Fax: (617) 495-0521

Ian Lamont — 03 Sep 2002, 12:59 · follows Ian Lamont

At 08:02 PM 8/28/02 -0400, you wrote:
Message-ID: <001501c24df5\$84ab72b0\$d5456c42@akt>
From: "Alice K. Turner" <aturner6 at nyc.rr.com>
To: <urth at urth.net>
Subject: Re: (urth) Crush's Page and Quetzal
Date: Tue, 27 Aug 2002 14:13:45 -0400
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Crush, have you met Robert Borski? You're both gifted with imagination plus, and should have much to discuss.

-alga

For those who haven't checked out Crush's Long Sun page
(<http://www.visualclick.com/~jwynn/GeneWolfe/LongSun/>),

I think it ought to be required reading for Long Sun discussion.

--

From: "James Wynn" <crushtv at HotPOP.com>
To: <urth at urth.net>
Subject: RE: (urth) Crush's Page and Quetzal
Date: Wed, 28 Aug 2002 08:52:51 -0500
Message-ID: <PLEFLJEIBGPANKPDCAMPGEJACEAA.crushtv at HotPOP.com>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

The nice comments I've received recently on my "articlettes" have surely turned my head.

I do need to thank Blattid for correcting my grammar on the use of the word "inhuma". Having not read the Short Sun books yet, I see now that my usage was wildly speculative. I've updated the Dionysus article and over the next few days I'll search the other articles for similar mistakes (I'm probably still using the word wrong). If anyone else has any technical comments, they will surely receive a glad hand. :)

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

From: Dan'l Danehy-Oakes [mailto:ddanehy at siebel.com]
Sent: Tuesday, August 27, 2002 5:36 PM
To: 'urth at urth.net'
Subject: (urth) Crush's Page and Quetzal

For those who haven't checked out Crush's Long Sun page (<http://www.visualclick.com/~jwynn/GeneWolfe/LongSun/>), I think it ought to be required reading for Long Sun discussion. I definitely don't agree with every conclusion he reaches (for example, I very much doubt that Incus is female, or that Hyacinth a male chem), but, wow, there is some good good stuff here.
--Blattid

--

--

From: "James Wynn" <crushtv at HotPOP.com>
To: <urth at urth.net>
Subject: RE: (urth) Crush's Page and Quetzal
Date: Wed, 28 Aug 2002 08:31:22 -0500
Message-ID: <PLEFLJEIBGPANKPDCAMPIEIPCEAA.crushtv at HotPOP.com>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Crush, have you met Robert Borski? You're both gifted with imagination plus,

and should have much to discuss.

-alga

I've never met Robert Borski, although I enjoyed his recent Peace article. I haven't to my knowledge met anyone on this list, although it is my desire to go to WorldCon one day and put a few faces to the names here.

:-D

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

From: Alice K. Turner [mailto:aturner6 at nyc.rr.com]

Sent: Tuesday, August 27, 2002 1:14 PM

To: urth at urth.net

Subject: Re: (urth) Crush's Page and Quetzal

For those who haven't checked out Crush's Long Sun page (<http://www.visualclick.com/~jwynn/GeneWolfe/LongSun/>), I think it ought to be required reading for Long Sun discussion.

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Ian Lamont — 03 Sep 2002, 12:59 · follows Ian Lamont

At 07:57 PM 8/30/02 -0400, you wrote:

From: "James Wynn" <crushtv at HotPOP.com>

To: <urth at urth.net>

Subject: (urth) FW: Elucidations of the Long Sun:Hyacinth

Date: Fri, 30 Aug 2002 09:31:57 -0500

Message-ID: <PLEFLJEIBGPANKPDCAMPOEKGCEAA.crushtv at HotPOP.com>

MIME-Version: 1.0

Content-Type: text/plain;

charset="us-ascii"

Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

Reply-To: urth at urth.net

The following is my response to A. Bin Talal who contacted me off-list but has offered of his own accord for my response to be posted on-list.

Thanks so much for your comments.

You say:

In Thelxepeia's Mirrors you assert that Hyacinth is male chem, your arguments for Hyacinth being a chem are very compelling, but do not explain how she became Viron's top prostitute.

Response

Well, the story is somewhat vague on exactly how that occurred. It probably began while she was sold by her (I'll refer to Hyacinth in the feminine) father to be a housemaid. She was attractive and she began to make money for sexual favors. From there, she began to take on the necessary modifications to make even more money.

You say:

The other arguments about overpowering the pilot could be taken as clues she is not human but a chem, a chem female should be stronger than a human

Response

True, and I consider her over-powering the pilot to be evidence that she is chem - not male. Actually, Marble DOES over-power Musk. This brings up a point that I should segregate those arguments that Hyacinth is a MALE chem from those that show she is MERELY chem.

You say:

The arguments for her being a male are alas unsound, you seem to use circular logic, she is a male because of 'thematic requirement'(which you assert there aren't any), the story about Apollo's lover and the church, but she represent that theme because she is a male!! in short you assume she is male, then conclude she is male, your conclusion is correct but you can't generalize it (I took a course on formal logic, never thinking I will be using it.

Response

I don't consider my arguments circular. I consider the story of Hyacinthus to be a thematic *allowance* that she "could" reasonably be male but not a requirement. If one accepts that Hyacinth is chem, then the concept of homosexuality might just as reasonably be satisfied by Silk's stated doppelganger relationship with Sgt. Sand (in Blood's house in Calde of the Long Sun). On the other hand, that would still not be homosexuality since chems are sexually divergent like bios. Still, Wolfe *could* have used Silks "mentoring" relationship with Horn on the airship to incorporate that aspect of the Apollo-Hyacinthus relationship - Wolfe does a lot of character syncretism in the sub textual themes of the Long Sun (I haven't yet published my essay on Silk and Auk playing duo roles as Hephaestus and as Aristaeus, or how Mint, Marble, and Rose merge into the Myrtle-nymphs, but I will after I finish reading Robert Graves' "White Goddess.")

My point is that while it "fits" for Hyacinth to be male, she doesn't NEED to be as IMO Incus NEEDS to be female because of the roll she plays regarding Quetzal (the demon-Dionysus) and the roll she plays in the Aristaeus story (not that Incus particularly needs to be a female, but in the sense that only a female could play those roles).

The most straight-forward clues that Hyacinth is male (there are weaker ones) are the following:

1. Hyacinth's statement:

"You know what I look like without all this [make-up and clothes]?...Like a boy, only with tits down to my waist."

2. In the Silks conversation with Horn on the airship, discussing why he

tried to kill himself, Silk talks about Marble's lie about being Moly and the general plight of the chem population *due to the lack* of female chems. Silk further points out, "Some male chems were artisans and farm laborers, from what I know of them, and a few were servants - butlers and so forth." 3. In the same conversation, Horn also says that Hyacinth behaves physically weak and in a female-identifiable manner, because she wants Silk to be attracted to her. Just as the fierce lynx, Lion (a female with a male name-note that this is specifically pointed out) pretends to be kittenish with Mucor.

Again, thank you so much for your interest, your arguments really made me think..

--

From: "James Wynn" <crushtv at HotPOP.com>
To: <urth at urth.net>
Subject: RE: RE: (urth) Crush's Page and Quetzal
Date: Fri, 30 Aug 2002 10:15:12 -0500
Message-ID: <PLEFLJEIBGPANKPDCAMPOEKICEAA.crushtv at HotPOP.com>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

After checking my sources, here's my response to Robert Borski's questions (thanks again Mr. Borski):
Robert Borski said

According to you she's a chem. So does this mean that she fabricated the story about her father being a head clerk at the Juzgado? (Newt by my reckoning.) And again, is she lying (or implanted with false memories) when she tells Auk that her father is a "pig's arse"?

My response:

No and no. Actually Silk says that he went to meet him. I sure her father is NOT Newt. Newt is a commissioner at the Juzgado in charge of the Guard finances. Hyacinth's father is a "head clerk" of the Fisc. Silk also met with an "officer" of the Fisc while he was there. Clearly her father is well down the chain of command. BTW: see the entry on Newt in "Things of the Long Sun".

There's no reason that her father could not be a chemical person. And as Silk discovered in Nightside, a talus can be bribed. What would a talus do with money? Marble explains in Exodus, "The same thing anyone would do with money, dear" So chems are not essentially different from bios when it comes to corrupt conduct. Is it so amazing that a chem parent would prostitute his child for money when bios sometimes do it?

Actually, the well-flagged concept that chems and taluses can be corrupted for money is sitting around in the story like an unfired gun in a play. I've fired it by tapping Hyacinth and her father as examples.

Robert Borski said

And who is the woman described as her dead mother that Hyacinth sees at Mainframe? Nettle seems to know her (I've theorized elsewhere she's Lime)

My response:

The woman was Hyacinth's mother. It is easier for me to imagine how chems would "go to Mainframe" when they die than it is for me to see how it is done with bios. As for Nettle knowing her that's an interesting question, but unless her mother can be clearly identified with a bio female it doesn't change anything. I'm curious about your "Lime" theory. I don't find it explained in the Urth archives. In the archives I DID see you make a reference to a snide comment by Wolfe regarding Hyacinth's mother in a "LS question list" - what is this?

--

Robert Borski said

Simply put, are there really that many chems running around outside the military and the religious orders, and are they as prone and subject to toxic parenting as your average bios?

My response:

Well there's not that many chems running around outside the military -- relatively. Marble is the only one I'm aware of in a religious order. Non-military chems are rare relative to when the Whorl left Urth, but they are not non-existent. No adults in Viron remarks on chems as if they'd never seen one before. I suppose if you or I were to walk the streets of Viron, we would no doubt think we saw chems everywhere we looked.

--

Robert Borski said

Since you're speculating about someone whose life history does not end with SHORT SUN, you also need to read Wolfe's follow-up series because there's an event in there that makes your theory even less tenable. I won't spoil it for you; suffice it to say I don't think rust is the causative agent.

I cannot express the pleasure I get from these e-mails.

-- Crush

--

From: "James Wynn" <crushtv at HotPOP.com>

To: <urth at urth.net>

Subject: RE: RE: (urth) Crush's Page and Quetzal

Date: Fri, 30 Aug 2002 10:35:29 -0500

Message-ID: <PLEFLJEIBGPANKPDCAMPEEKJCEAA.crushtv at HotPOP.com>

MIME-Version: 1.0

Content-Type: text/plain;

charset="iso-8859-1"

Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

Reply-To: urth at urth.net

I intended to clip the following Boski question from my response since I answered it in my other recent posting. Failing to clip it makes it look like I'm being sarcastic when that was NOT my intention.

Robert Borski said

Since you're speculating about someone whose life history does not end with SHORT SUN, you also need to read Wolfe's follow-up series because there's an event in there that makes your theory even less tenable. I won't spoil it for you; suffice it to say I don't think rust is the causative agent.

--

Message-ID: <20020830203403.90592.qmail at web14410.mail.yahoo.com>
Date: Fri, 30 Aug 2002 13:34:03 -0700 (PDT)
From: Jerry Friedman <jerry_friedman at yahoo.com>
Subject: Re: (urth) FW: Elucidations of the Long Sun:Hyacinth
To: urth at urth.net
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

--- James Wynn <crushtv at HotPOP.com> wrote:

The following is my response to A. Bin Talal who contacted me off-list but has offered of his own accord for my response to be posted on-list.

Thanks so much for your comments.

...

You say:

The other arguments about overpowering the pilot could be taken as clues she is not human but a chem, a chem female should be stronger than a human

Response

True, and I consider her over-powering the pilot to be evidence that she is chem - not male.

Why is that inconsistent with her being a healthy young human woman who has experience at fighting? She takes the pilot by surprise, ramming her thumbs into her (the pilot's) eyes and kicking her knees until she falls down. Seems quite reasonable to me. Silk thinks Hyacinth blinded the pilot, but Chenille (I think) disagrees. This is evidence that Hyacinth is **not** a chem--someone with superhuman strength could (I imagine) obviously blind a person this way by breaking her eyeballs, and probably obviously cripple her knees as well.

Actually, Marble DOES over-power Musk. This brings up a point that I should segregate those arguments that Hyacinth is a MALE chem from those that show she is MERELY chem.

Quite true.

...

The most straight-forward clues that Hyacinth is male (there are weaker ones) are the following:

1. Hyacinth's statement:

"You know what I look like without all this [make-up and clothes]?...Like a boy, only with tits down to my waist."

She doesn't mean she has a penis. Silk would have spotted that (and then would have nicknamed Hyacinth "Pinto"). I don't think this comment is particularly amazing for a slender young woman who has had a breast enhancement and tends to speak of her appearance deprecatingly. Incidentally, it brings up what I think is one of the stronger criticisms of your theory: would Silk really have sex with someone he knew was a chem, and if not, could he really be fooled?

2. In the Silks conversation with Horn on the airship, discussing why he tried to kill himself, Silk talks about Marble's lie about being Moly and the general plight of the chem population *due to the lack* of female chems.

Silk further points out, "Some male chems were artisans and farm laborers, from what I know of them, and a few were servants - butlers and so forth."

I don't see this as a straightforward clue. In fact, I don't see it as evidence at all.

3. In the same conversation, Horn also says that Hyacinth behaves physically weak and in a female-identifiable manner, because she wants Silk to be attracted to her. Just as the fierce lynx, Lion (a female with a male name-note that this is specifically pointed out) pretends to be kittenish with Mucor.

This seems to be completely consistent with her being a tough young woman thanks to the life at Orchid's that Chenille describes.

By far the best clue I see that Hyacinth *could* be a chem is her name, as you pointed out. But I see nothing to contradict the obvious interpretation that she's a bio.

Speaking of Chenille and names, this seems like a good time to restate my theory that Chenille, who has an ambiguous name, could be a chromosomal male with testicular feminization syndrome (perhaps Tussah's failed attempt at a male heir?).

...

Jerry Friedman

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--

I am on vacation during the last week of August. I will get back to you after I return on Labor Day.

Thanks,

Ian Lamont
Assistant Web Site Manager
Harvard Alumni Affairs and Development Office
124 Mount Auburn Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
Tel: (617) 495-8183
Fax: (617) 495-0521

Ian Lamont — 03 Sep 2002, 12:59 · follows Ian Lamont

At 07:59 PM 8/29/02 -0400, you wrote:
Message-ID: <000801c24ef0\$d6dfbd60\$ddf0c518@robertbo>
From: "Robert Borski" <rborski at charter.net>
To: <urth at urth.net>
Subject: Re: (urth) Crush's Page and Quetzal
Date: Wed, 28 Aug 2002 19:12:56 -0500
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Crush, have you met Robert Borski? You're both gifted with imagination plus,
and should have much to discuss.
-alga

I've never met Robert Borski, although I enjoyed his recent Peace article.

I
haven't to my knowledge met anyone on this list, although it is my desire to
go to WorldCon one day and put a few faces to the names here.

(Extending a right hand blithely across the aether.) How do you do, Crush!

I've never met anyone on the list either, although Nigel Price and I talked about getting together last spring; alas, while he was in the American Midwest, I was in Central Europe. That being said, however, I fear you've misread alga's comments, which were intended not as a suggestion that you and I actually meet, but that your work, like mine, is neither valid nor substantive, but rather falls into the realm of "fan fiction." Like me, you've apparently been "swimming with undines," thus your severe intellectual anoxia. Thank the stars she didn't call you my "partner in flakiness," like she did Prion (aka Sean Whalen), who promptly left the list after the tirade she leveled against him. And heaven forbid your work ever find acceptance elsewhere; I fear the six essays I wrote on Wolfe that have been published by The New York Review of Science Fiction have forever sullied its reputation (obviously Ms. Turner's essays on John Crowley were accepted by an editorial cadre in much more command of its critical faculties). In other words expect a certain amount of ridicule, scorn, and derision to your Long Sun exegeses by what is, thankfully, not a large contingent on the list; if you're extremely unlucky, however, as I've been, expect a fair amount of shrillness from you-know-who.

Personally, I applaud your efforts. I don't agree with many of your conclusions, but rather than take a cheap shot at what has obviously been a labor of love, with a fair amount of scholarship ("Those who have original thoughts, post; those who don't, carp"), I thought I'd ask you a few questions about your Hyacinth essay. According to you she's a chem. So does this mean that she fabricated the story about her father being a head clerk at the Juzgado? (Newt by my reckoning.) And again, is she lying (or implanted with false memories) when she tells Auk that her father is a "pig's arse"? And who is the woman described as her dead mother that Hyacinth sees at Mainframe? Nettle seems to know her (I've theorized elsewhere she's Lime), but wouldn't she have to be a chem--as must be her father? Simply put, are there really that many chems running around outside the military and the religious orders, and are they as prone and subject to toxic parenting as your average bios? Since you're speculating about someone whose life history does not end with SHORT SUN, you also need to read Wolfe's followup series because there's an event in there that makes your theory even less tenable. I won't spoil it for you; suffice it to say I don't think rust is the causative agent.

Robert Borski

--

From: "James Wynn" <crushtv at HotPOP.com>
To: <urth at urth.net>
Subject: RE: (urth) Crush's Page and Quetzal
Date: Thu, 29 Aug 2002 18:05:38 -0500
Message-ID: <PLEFLJEIBGPANKPDCAMPAEKECEAA.crushtv at HotPOP.com>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Regarding essays at <http://www.visualclick.com/~jwynn/GeneWolfe/LongSun/>

Robert Borski said:

I fear you've misread alga's comments, which were intended not as a suggestion that you and I actually meet, but that your work, like mine, is neither valid nor substantive...In other words expect a certain amount of ridicule, scorn, and derision to your Long Sun exegeses...

My response:

Unfortunately, I'm not so harassed by fraternal greetings and compliments that I can afford to exegete them when they come my way. I'll presume until textually proven otherwise that by "imagination plus" Alga meant merely "...plus imagination" rather than "...plus something-else-not-so-wonderful." As for receiving derision, I should HOPE to converse with someone who feels so strongly about the Long Sun series - that's why I published the essays on a website. So deride away! It's up to the derider however to engage me enough to respond. I purpose that no shots will be "cheap", I'll do all I can to see that they are hard won.

Robert Borski said

I thought I'd ask you a few questions about your Hyacinth essay.

My response:

I'm working on a response to your questions, but I can't finish until I can check my sources. Still I've received a couple emails offline on the chem-Hyacinth theory that follow the same tack, and I'd like to respond to that "tack" first.

First if people are responding off-list because they feel more comfortable for some reason, yet **really** want to discuss some point, that's fine. But if someone responds off-list to keep from **humiliating** me, their concern is misdirected. The purpose of this list, I would guess, is to exchange opinions.

Second, no matter WHAT one believes about Hyacinth, her impressive bosom is bursting with lies and slight-of-hands about her **true** nature. As I say in "Thelxepeia's Mirrors," the Hyacinth citation is not really finished and won't be until after I re-read the books. I currently ONLY cite the clues that she IS a chem rather than explain the (IMO) mis-directions that she is NOT a chem. My conviction currently rests only on affirmative proofs. That's only half the ballgame, I know.

Consequently, while I think I allay certain general concerns like those Mr. Borski is asking. I can't really address specific problems like "if Hyacinth is a chem, how does she cry? or "then why is she CLAIM to be a junkie?" or "why does she stuff her face with nectarines?"

At the end of Silk's discussion with Horn on the airship, Silk says of his reasons for trying to kill himself, "Isn't it obvious [after all I've told you]?" Well it isn't "obvious." It IS (to me at this point), however, inexorable. Still, I welcome all challenges to anything I've published on my site, including this. Just understand that I can't answer everything.....yet.

Third, as to my need to read the Short Sun, I guess I will have to read this one if only to have the credentials to discuss Hyacinth. But I've paid enough attention to the Urth list discussion to know she's dies and there is some ambiguity as to how. This is not a spoiler for me because: Since Silk and Hyacinth are Apollo and Hyacinthus -- and there is more reason than just her name to suggest they are - it is necessary that Silk will directly cause her death - the only question is how.

I'm inclined to disbelieve, though obviously without evidence, that the manner of her death insists that she's bio since every person whose brought this up, felt the need to supply other (less persuasive?) proofs. Unless there is blood all over the walls, it's hard to imagine that it will present in more difficult puzzle than why does she produce snot when she cries and why is her breath warm.

Does the event in question take place in "On Blue's Waters?" I do have that one already.

Curiously, I kind of expected my other (I thought) controversial theory, that Incus is a woman, to provoke at least as many challenges as Hyacinth's. I feel much on much better ground to defend it. Then again, perhaps I **have** defended it better since no one has yet offered a detailed challenge on that.

A sole-proprietor in flakiness,
-- Crush

--

I am on vacation during the last week of August. I will get back to you after I return on Labor Day.

Thanks,

Ian Lamont
Assistant Web Site Manager
Harvard Alumni Affairs and Development Office
124 Mount Auburn Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
Tel: (617) 495-8183
Fax: (617) 495-0521

Ian Lamont — 03 Sep 2002, 12:59 · follows Ian Lamont

At 07:57 PM 9/2/02 -0400, you wrote:
Message-ID: <019e01c2521c\$941cea00\$d5456c42@akt>
From: "Alice K. Turner" <aturner6 at nyc.rr.com>
To: <urth at urth.net>
Subject: Re: (urth) Newt's main referent
Date: Sun, 1 Sep 2002 21:03:41 -0400
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Good call, Nick. Some major convention (WorldCon, I guess) was held in, I think, Atlanta in the 80s and Newt, for reasons that I think had to do with Bruce Sterling, was the banquet speaker. Though I'm not much of a conventioneer, I attended this (my parents lived in Atlanta) as a friend of Lucius Shepard, and, though I never met him there, I'm pretty sure Wolfe was on hand. I'd only barely heard of Gingrich at that point. But, among the more politically minded, there was much furor, and a contingent, including Lucius (but not me), ostentatiously walked out of the banquet as Gingrich was introduced. Can't remember much about the speech or the evening otherwise except that both were boring--but that you expect. Gingrich seemed more menacing later, but that was the explicit SF connection. (Sorry to be so vague on particulars, but I've sort of accidentally attended a few conventions or parts of them; the only ones I remember well are those I'd planned in advance, and this was a last-minute thing--if it wasn't Atlanta I apologize, but it was somewhere else I just happened to be for other reasons.)

-alga

Considering when EXODUS FROM THE LONG SUN was being written (1994-5), Councillor Newt has a pretty obvious

real-life referent: Newt Gingrich, elected Speaker of the US House of Representatives after the unexpected Republican congressional election victories of November 1994. From what we see of Newt, the resemblance is pretty profound...

--Nick Gevers.

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--

Date: Mon, 2 Sep 2002 01:16:54 -0400 (EDT)
From: Michael Straight <straight at email.unc.edu>
To: urth at urth.net
Subject: Re: (urth) Newt's main referent
Message-ID: <Pine.A41.4.44+UNC.0209020103420.26648-100000 at login0.isis.unc.edu>
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

On Sun, 1 Sep 2002, Alice K. Turner wrote:

Good call, Nick. Some major convention (WorldCon, I guess) was held in, I think, Atlanta in the 80s and Newt, for reasons that I think had to do with Bruce Sterling, was the banquet speaker.

Also, at the time, Newt was one of the most famous science-fiction writers in America (along with William Shatner and, arguably, Stephen King).

-Rostrum

--

Date: Mon, 02 Sep 2002 01:29:43 -0700
From: maa32 <maa32 at dana.ucc.nau.edu>
Subject: (urth) male hyacinth
Sender: maa32 <maa32 at dana.ucc.nau.edu>
To: urth at urth.net
Message-id: <3D737498 at webmail.nau.edu>
MIME-version: 1.0
Content-type: text/plain; charset=ISO-8859-1
Content-transfer-encoding: 7BIT
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

A couple months ago I posted on the evidence for a male hyacinth, and I was taken aback to discover that someone else thought that up independently - it was kind of a joke. Let me briefly go over why I thought so: right before Silk meets Hyacinth for the first time, he finds all kinds of statues of boy toys for the gods: Ganymede and Catamitus, both boy lovers that I normally associate with Musk. But Hyacinthus is the same kind of mythic figure: male lover of Apollo, stricken dead by the jealous wind. But instead of Musk, he immediately meets Hyacinth, who has fake breasts. Then later, in Calde of

the

Long Sun ,Patera Quetzal, when Silk claims that he slept with a woman, says he

doesn't believe that his augur has done that. It sounds like nothing, but Wolfe has a ton of those double entendres in his work. I'm just surprised that someone else came up with the same thematic idea - the evidence isn't as sketchy as the evidence that suggest that Patera Pike is Blood's father, but it's pretty sketchy. I don't see the chem part as convincing, but I think Hyacinth could certainly be an ex-male who had a little transformation enacted

and it explains the sterility of Silk's relationship.

I don't know how seriously to take these things, really. Not as seriously as a take a lot of the other stuff I post.

Marc Aramini

--

From: matthew.malthouse at guardian.co.uk

To: urth at urth.net

Message-ID: <80256C28.0036FA7B.00 at ldnmta01.guardian.co.uk>

Date: Mon, 2 Sep 2002 10:34:24 +0100

Subject: Re: FW: (urth) FW: Elucidations of the Long Sun:Hyacinth

Mime-Version: 1.0

Content-type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii

Reply-To: urth at urth.net

On 31/08/2002 19:24:14 Andy Robertson wrote:

Is it really possible that all the discussions on this list have been this

loony, and it is only now I come back after some time away that I am able to judge them properly? :-)

A break does provide one with perspective, does it not? ;-)

Matthew

--

Message-ID: <007301c25251\$02914a60\$f3919ed9@abcomcus>

From: "Andy Robertson" <andywrobertson at clara.co.uk>

To: <urth at urth.net>

Subject: Re: FW: (urth) FW: Elucidations of the Long Sun:Hyacinth

Date: Mon, 2 Sep 2002 08:18:54 +0100

MIME-Version: 1.0

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

Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Ah well, I love it anyway. But the idea that Hyacinth is a transsexual bio does seem slightly more probable, I confess: though I really see no need for

it.

hartshorn

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

From: <matthew.malthouse at guardian.co.uk>

To: <urth at urth.net>

Sent: Monday, September 02, 2002 10:34 AM

Subject: Re: FW: (urth) FW: Elucidations of the Long Sun:Hyacinth

On 31/08/2002 19:24:14 Andy Robertson wrote:

Is it really possible that all the discussions on this list have been this

loony, and it is only now I come back after some time away that I am able to judge them properly? :-)

A break does provide one with perspective, does it not? ;-)

Matthew

--

From: matthew.malthouse at guardian.co.uk

To: urth at urth.net

Message-ID: <80256C28.0038FC81.00 at ldnmta01.guardian.co.uk>

Date: Mon, 2 Sep 2002 10:56:20 +0100

Subject: Re: (urth) male hyacinth

Mime-Version: 1.0

Content-type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii

Reply-To: urth at urth.net

On 02/09/2002 09:29:43 maa32 wrote:

A couple months ago I posted on the evidence for a male hyacinth, and I was taken aback to discover that someone else thought that up independently - it

was kind of a joke. Let me briefly go over why I thought so: right before

Silk meets Hyacinth for the first time, he finds all kinds of statues of boy

toys for the gods: Ganymede and Catamitus, both boy lovers that I normally

associate with Musk. But Hyacinthus is the same kind of mythic figure:

male

lover of Apollo, stricken dead by the jealous wind. But instead of Musk, he

immediately meets Hyacinth, who has fake breasts.

I too the statuary, Hyacinth's potential androgeny etc as re-inforcement of Musk's character and lifestyle. I'm far from convinced that - even with Wolfe's infamous multi-layered work - there's any need to see more to it than that.

If one posits that Hyacinth is ex-male, male , chem male or female one has to answer what purpose it serves. More what purpose would it serve to have Silk fall in love with such a being. That would seem contrary to Wolfe's normal path in such matters and would require explanation.

Matthew

--

I am on vacation during the last week of August. I will get back to you after I return on Labor Day.

Thanks,

Ian Lamont
Assistant Web Site Manager
Harvard Alumni Affairs and Development Office
124 Mount Auburn Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
Tel: (617) 495-8183
Fax: (617) 495-0521

Ian Lamont — 03 Sep 2002, 12:59 · follows Ian Lamont

At 07:56 PM 8/24/02 -0400, you wrote:
Date: Fri, 23 Aug 2002 17:29:10 -0700
From: maa32 <maa32 at dana.ucc.nau.edu>
Subject: (urth) coldhouse
Sender: maa32 <maa32 at dana.ucc.nau.edu>
To: urth at urth.net
Message-id: <3D683069 at webmail.nau.edu>
MIME-version: 1.0
Content-type: text/plain; charset=ISO-8859-1
Content-transfer-encoding: 7BIT
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

I had always assumed that the victim in the coldhouse prank was Sherry Gold's brother, who was not on the best of terms with his parents and wanted to move out (as I recall from a reading a few years ago - or was he already living in a boardinghouse?) Perhaps he confronted Weer about his sister after getting a job there (he was looking for a job, right?) and then Weer took the opportunity to play a convenient prank on him. Of course, I need to read Peace again. Just my two cents. At least Gold has motive to get close to Weer, and Weer has reason to get rid of Sherry's brother.
Marc Aramini

--

Message-Id: <v03130300b98c8ff35a70@[209.179.250.217]>
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"

Date: Fri, 23 Aug 2002 18:30:24 -0700
To: urth at urth.net
From: Michael Andre-Driussi <mantis at siriusfiction.com>
Subject: Re: (urth) coldhouse
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

Marc Aramini wrote:

I had always assumed that the victim in the coldhouse prank was Sherry Gold's brother, who was not on the best of terms with his parents and wanted to move out (as I recall from a reading a few years ago - or was he already living in a boardinghouse?)

The coldhouse prank was in 1938.

Weer met Sherry around 1954.

Sherry was only just born at the time of the prank (1954 - 16 = 1938). Which is rather weird, come to think of it.

=mantis=

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--

From: StoneOx17 at aol.com
Message-ID: <cb.272588ee.2a98413f at aol.com>
Date: Fri, 23 Aug 2002 21:54:07 EDT
Subject: Re: (urth) The Coldhouse Prank
To: urth at urth.net
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="US-ASCII"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Reply-To: urth at urth.net

In a message dated 8/23/2002 7:57:25 PM Eastern Daylight Time, Robert Borski writes:

Stone Ox writes:

Robert Borski argues quite eloquently that Ted Singer's father is the victim in the coldhouse prank. I don't think this can be right, because the victim lived in a boarding house, was locked in on Friday, and nobody noticed he was missing until he was discovered on Monday. If the victim had had a wife or girlfriend, surely he would have been discovered sooner.

But look who imparts this information about the weekend tragedy and the boarding house connection: Dan French, who, not having been a factory employee at the time, is simply repeating the sanitized version of the story

as it's been spun down through the years and perhaps even through semi-official channels, since there's been a coverup. (I do, however, and for obvious reasons, like the notion that the victim died on Friday.) He doesn't remember the name of the victim and is completely unaware there is an even more sinister side to the entire episode, with a lone person being responsible for the victim's death. As Den also reminds us earlier, such stories have a way of becoming "both faded and embroidered by time," which results in a further blurring of the details. And lastly when Dan French tells the story of the sidhe, it deviates from the traditional in several respects.

In other words I think there's plenty of reason to doubt his version of the story.

When Dan French is telling the story of the sidhe, it's an embedded story, and Wolfe has changed, or invented, many (if not all) of the embedded stories, so as to shed light on events in the book. On the other hand, if we believe that Weer was the perpetrator of the coldhouse prank, I'd consider it part of Weer's own life story, and I'm much more reluctant to believe that Wolfe is altering the details here. But this relates to the whole unicorn debate, which I think we could argue about for eternity.

I just had the thought that maybe part of the reason there's been so much discussion about Mr. Tilly's story and Doris's story is that it's not clear whether they should be counted as embedded stories or not.

-Stone Ox

--

I am on vacation during the last week of August. I will get back to you after I return on Labor Day.

Thanks,

Ian Lamont
Assistant Web Site Manager
Harvard Alumni Affairs and Development Office
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