

The eyes of a clone

The Urth list — 21 messages, 6 voices, 27 Jul 2005

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4478>

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Roy C. Lackey — 27 Jul 2005, 21:02

The four people Silk saw in his vision during his brief 'death' in the tunnel collapse were, first, his mother, the woman who carried his embryo to term and raised him, the woman he calls "Mother". Second was the man with the face of the carved bust in his mother's closet, Tussah. Third was the tall, blue-eyed man who said "We're your parents." and "Your fathers and your mothers." This blue-eyed man is presumed to be Silk's biological father. Fourth was the reticent woman who is not described and who is his presumptive biological mother. With this much there is little, if any, dispute that I am aware of.

Where Crane came from, blue eyes were so rare that Silk's were only the third pair he had ever seen. Though not so rare in Viron, Silk estimated that only about one in one-hundred people there had them. He said he took particular note of people with blue eyes because he had been teased about his as a kid. Nineteen-year-old Chenille, who wished she had blue eyes but didn't (they are several times described as being "dark eyes"), told Silk that there was one current and one recent, former whore (Arolla) at Orchid's with blue eyes. Since Crane served as whorehouse physician, presumably those two were the other two blue-eyed people he had seen before meeting Silk. If that leaves out Hyacinth, I can't help it. Mamelta must have been the fourth person Crane saw who had blue eyes.

Typhon's eye color is not given in the Urth cycle, but he has yellow hair, which is often the case for people with blue eyes, just as is the case with Silk. So it is very possible, even likely, that Typhon had blue eyes. Some hold that the tall, blue-eyed man in Silk's vision was Typhon. It's possible, but if so it's the only instance that I am aware of of Typhon being depicted as monocephalic in the LONG SUN or SHORT SUN books. After all, Silk noted the blue eyes but, if he saw two pairs of eyes and two heads, he didn't think them worth mentioning.

I don't know Tussah's eye color, but his facial features ("wide, flat cheeks, the narrow eyes, the high, rounded forehead, and the generous mouth" [CALDE, chap. 10]) were so much like Chenille's that the resemblance is what convinced Silk that she was Tussah's natural daughter. Chenille's "dark eyes" are later specifically labeled as brown, and Horn thought that beneath her dyed curls her hair was "dark". (EXODUS, 338) Horn also said that Silk didn't look like Chenille.

By now, anyone who cares will have guessed where I'm going with this. Crush has insisted that both Tussah and Horn are clones of Typhon and that the tall, blue-eyed man in Silk's vision was Typhon. I don't have proof that Tussah wasn't a clone of Typhon, so I'll let that go, for now. But I do find it more than a little queer that Silk failed to notice that both men in his vision looked exactly alike. I would be even more amazed that Silk also failed to notice how much Horn looked like a fifteen-year-old version of the men in his vision -- he could see the resemblance of the older teen, Chenille, to Tussah, after all -- but for the fact that Silk didn't see the resemblance because it wasn't there.

Chapter 1, NIGHTSIDE:

"With a slight shock of insight, Silk realized that this unaccustomed perpendicularity was in imitation of his own, and that Horn's clear, dark eyes were very nearly level with his."

Dark eyes, like Chenille's. Brown eyes. If the blue-eyed man in the vision was Typhon, then Horn can not be a clone of his.

-Roy

thalassocrat at nym.hush.com — 31 Jul 2005, 02:56 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Roy wrote:

<Well-argued stuff which I agree with.>

I've long felt that if Wolfe is teasing us with hidden family currents, one of them might lead from Sev to Horn.

There are a bunch of little things you can drag together to make this look borderline plausible.

When Sev meets the Autarch on the battlefield towards the end of Citadel, the Autarch tells him: "Tou ... have always seemed to me a

construction of horn and boiled leather."

On Green, he carries a sword which might suggest Terminus Est. One of the first Neighbors he meets refers to him as (something like), "You who have been all of your race." He's an ummm severe kind of character, resourceful, most happy when apart from the mass of humanity, with a strong romantic streak, and certain non-PC elements in his approach to sexual relations.

Their stories have certain parallels: setting out on a lone journey

into the unknown, melding characters with other parties, enrolled by higher powers as an agent of salvation.

Assuming that dark versus light coloring is significant - he, like Sev, is dark.

At least this would give some kind of depth to the otherwise disappointing Silkhorn-meets-Sev passages in Short Sun.

Maybe there's a wider loop, too, embracing Ymar as well. The parallels between Ymar and Sev are many & blatant: they must, somehow, be the "same". Ymar the Alpha, Sev the Omega.

On a little tangent, I think Sev's childhood play-tomb must be Ymar's. It's surely the tomb of someone who went off in a ship and returned. If we are to believe (as we are told) that Sev's predecessor was the first Autarch since Ymar to make the journey, then whose else could it really be? At the end of New Sun, we are left with the suggestion that it was Sev's own tomb, somehow or other; I think it must have been both Sev's and Ymar's - again, somehow or other.

don doggett — 31 Jul 2005, 16:50 · in reply to thalassocrat at nym.hush.com

--- thalassocrat at nym.hush.com wrote:

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play-tomb must be
Ymar's. It's surely the tomb of someone who went off
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predecessor was the first Autarch since Ymar to make
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then whose else could it really be? At the end of
New Sun, we are
left with the suggestion that it was Sev's own tomb,
somehow or
other; I think it must have been both Sev's and
Ymar's - again,
somehow or other.

Thank you, thank you. I for one am 110% behind you on
this.

Don

mournings glory — 31 Jul 2005, 19:44 · in reply to thalassocrat at nym.hush.com

Master-of-the-sea writes:

On a little tangent, I think Sev's childhood play-tomb must be
Ymar's. It's surely the tomb of someone who went off in a ship and
returned. If we are to believe (as we are told) that Sev's
predecessor was the first Autarch since Ymar to make the journey,
then whose else could it really be? At the end of New Sun, we are
left with the suggestion that it was Sev's own tomb, somehow or
other; I think it must have been both Sev's and Ymar's - again,
somehow or other.

But not only is there a ship on the door, there's a rose and a fountain--and if ever two symbols
clashed with what we know of Ymar, it's these. Remember his nickname? As we learn in _Urth_
it's Reechy, because as the future first autarch tells Severian (and grinning no less, as if he's
proud of the fact), "It's because I stink." (p 268). So please tell me how a symbol connected with
water, cleanliness and purity, as well as a flower known for its lovely smell, comes to be
associated with someone who, because he's foresworn bathing of any kind, is anything but
roselike.

(I do, however, note that if you rearrange the letters in Ymar you get
-Mary, as in Rosemary, the Wolfe-man's bride of some 49 years.<gr>)

msg

Roy C. Lackey — 31 Jul 2005, 21:00 · follows mournings glory

Thalassocrat wrote:
When Sev meets the Autarch on the battlefield towards the end of
Citadel, the Autarch tells him: "Tou ... have always seemed to me a

construction of horn and boiled leather."

Is there another term for boiled leather that can be linked to a named character? I don't know;
I'm asking.

Assuming that dark versus light coloring is significant - he [Horn], like Sev, is dark.

Both have dark eyes and Sev has dark hair, but Sev has very pale skin, as was textually established last month by Tony Ellis. Msg also posted this physical description of Sev, attributed to Wolfe:

Wolfe: You didn't say at what point in his life, so I'll choose him at the time he leaves the Citadel. He is 6' 1" and weighs 175 pounds. He is pale, with dark eyes, dark straight hair, and good teeth. His face is long and rather bony; high, square forehead, moderately high cheekbones, strong chin.
He is muscular; his hands are a little larger than average.

Not incidentally, Sev's dark hair puts some hurt on any Sev-is-a-clone-of-yellow-haired-Typhon theories, irrespective of whether or not Typhon had blue eyes. To say nothing of Sev and Silk being clones

Maybe there's a wider loop, too, embracing Ymar as well. The parallels between Ymar and Sev are many & blatant: they must, somehow, be the "same". Ymar the Alpha, Sev the Omega.

I think someone has suggested that Ymar may have been a clone of Typhon, but that can't be, either. Ymar had "wild black hair". (URTH, 265) As for Sev being a clone of Ymar (or vice versa), Sev said this of him: "He flushed, his dark cheeks growing darker still." (260) For me, those dark cheeks and Sev's pale face weigh against their being clones.

On a little tangent, I think Sev's childhood play-tomb must be Ymar's.

I have _never_ been able to get an answer as to who was buried in Sev's tomb. In fact, the only person I could be pretty sure _wasn't_ buried there was Sev. <g> I mean, the two times Sev died and left a body behind, on Tzadkiel's ship and in Apu's tomb, don't give me any reason to suppose they had been or would be relocated there. Certainly it isn't related or implied in the narrative. Your suggestion solves the problem, Alexander style. I was asking the wrong question!

It's surely the tomb of someone who went off in a ship and returned. If we are to believe (as we are told) that Sev's predecessor was the first Autarch since Ymar to make the journey, then whose else could it really be? At the end of New Sun, we are left with the suggestion that it was Sev's own tomb, somehow or other; I think it must have been both Sev's and Ymar's - again, somehow or other.

Yes, that business about Sev at that point (right after B F & O resurrected him in Apu's tomb) looking so much like the funeral bronze he remembered should be accounted for, but it isn't in the text. And it leaves unsettled whether or not the tomb Cilinia was buried in is the same tomb where Sev played. The discrepancies MSG pointed out can't be ignored. Don Doggett has also made the suggestion that Sev's tomb was really Ymar's. You both may be right. The tomb was not built during Sev's lifetime, at least not during the time we are shown, and when he left Apu's time he went back to Ushas. His story ends there and the drowned tomb becomes moot to Urth.

The Citadel antedates Typhon and the topmost area of the sides of the hill may have been used already by the time Typhon came along. Sev's childhood playhouse wasn't too far down the hill, iirc. It makes sense for the tomb to have been built early in the autarchy, if not before. When -- and _why_ -- would a tomb for Sev have been built long before he was even born?

The lives of Typhon and Ymar overlapped, but Ymar was a wretched boy and Typhon secluded and near death on his mountain. I don't see any connection between them. I don't know how

Ymar became the ruler, but I find it easier to believe that Typhon's young daughter was buried in Ymar's tomb than in Sev's tomb, assuming she wasn't buried in a different tomb altogether.

-Roy

thalassocrat at nym.hush.com — 31 Jul 2005, 21:15 · follows Roy C. Lackey

On Sun, 31 Jul 2005 19:44:41 -0700 mournings glory
<mourningsglory at hotmail.com> wrote:
But not only is there a ship on the door, there's a rose and a
fountain--and
if ever two symbols clashed with what we know of Ymar, it's these.

Remember
his nickname? As we learn in _Urth_ it's Reechy, because as the
future first
autarch tells Severian (and grinning no less, as if he's proud of
the fact),
"It's because I stink." (p 268). So please tell me how a symbol
connected
with water, cleanliness and purity, as well as a flower known for
its lovely
smell, comes to be associated with someone who, because he's
foresworn
bathing of any kind, is anything but roselike.

Well, I don't think he's actually "foresworn bathing of any kind". In winter it's hard for a servant boy of the proto-torturers to wash. I doubt that he'll still be known as "Reechy" once he becomes the first Autarch.

The rose & fountain are symbols of renewal, which on this story of course would have come to Ymar from Sev's brief mission in the proto-Matachin Tower.

thalassocrat at nym.hush.com — 31 Jul 2005, 22:43 · follows thalassocrat at nym.hush.com

Roy says:

Is there another term for boiled leather that can be linked to a
named
character? I don't know; I'm asking.

Google gives me "cuir boulli; the root of the later word cuirass, used to describe a breastplate". Not a lot of help.

I dislike the whole clone thing & wish it would go away. AFAIK, there's nothing in the text to suggest that Silk or anybody else is

a clone. The info we have on Silk is that he had, almost certainly,

a biological father & mother (whose spirits we glimpse on the Aureate Path); and that, most probably, his embryo was tinkered with to make him more <whatever>.

(How come Silk is short-sighted? I doubt that Typhon ever had to wear glasses. I guess the embryo timkering couldn't catch everything. Is there a plausible short-sighted blue-eyed biological

father or mother anywhere?)

James Wynn — 03 Aug 2005, 16:28 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

(Tony and Thassocrat, please avert your eyes.)

"When the last calde's will was read, it said, 'Though he is not the son of my body, my son will succeed me.' What do you make of that?"

Silk stroked his cheek. "It didn't name this son?"

"No. I've given you the entire clause."

~ Epiphany of the LS, pg 125

In his original post for this thread, Roy laid out Silk's meeting with his parents. Ultimately, he asserted essentially that:

Typhon, or at least Silk's bio-dad, had blue eyes and Horn had dark eyes (like Chenille) so therefore Horn is not a clone of Typhon, or at least not a clone of Silk's bio-dad.

However, Roy, I think you moved off-track rather early in your argument. Specifically in the first paragraph when you said the following:

This blue-eyed man is presumed to be Silk's biological father. Fourth was the reticent woman who is not described and who is his presumptive biological mother. With this much there is little, if any, dispute that I am aware of.

Actually, this **is** quite disputable. Let's take a look at the actual reference. As is so frequently the case with Wolfe's writing and conversation, just when you think he is being totally objective and straightforward, you find he has deliberately smudged everything:

The Trivigante airship was a brown beetle, infinitely remote, the Aureate Path so near he knew it could not be his final destination.

He lighted upon it, and found it a road of tinsel down a whorl no bigger than an egg. Where were the lowing beasts? The spirits of the other dead? There! Two men and two women. He blinked and stared and blinked again.

"Oh, Silk! My son! Oh, son!" She was in his arms and he in hers, melting in tears of joy.

"Mother!" "Silk, my son!"

The whorl was filth and stink, futility and betrayal; this was everything--joy and love, freedom and purity.

"You must go back, Silk. He sends us to tell you."

"You must, my lad." A man's voice, the voice of which Lemur's had been a species of mockery. Looking up he saw the carved brown face from his mother's closet.

"We're your parents." He was tall and blue-eyed, "Your fathers and your mothers." The other woman did not speak, but her eyes spoke truth.

"You were my mother," he said. "I understand." He looked down at his own beautiful mother.

"You will always be my Mother . Always!"

"We'll be waiting, Silk my son. All of us. Remember."

a) Only one man (it seems) speaks. He has "the carved brown face from [Silk's] mother's closet." He is also tall and blue-eyed. And...here is something bizarre kicker...he has a voice calling to mind LEMUR's. Rather than it being the other **woman** who is not described as Roy stated, it is actually one of the **men** who is not described. At least for the other woman, we know Silk identifies her as his mother, by her eyes ("her eyes spoke truth").

And this is important, we actually have no confirmation whether the man with the "carved brown face" is Tussah or the other father. We presume it is Tussah...probably it is, but what if it made no difference? The only thing, I contend, that we know about this silent man is that Wolfe has said extratextually that Silk's *ancestry* is that he is the son of the Calde and his mistress. If you believe -- and I have no real doubt that this is so -- that Silk's bio-mom is the original Kypris, that really only leaves Typhon.

b) Why does the voice of the father who speaks seem reminiscent of Lemur's? I won't even speculate, beyond noting that Lemur's brother Loris had "blue eyes..like chips of ice". (Epiphany of the LS pg 287) But then again, that was an artificial body. Does his having blue eyes prove anything in particular? Not based on that alone.

c) But why do readers keep assuming that the man with the "carved brown face" and the man with the blue eyes are different? Because we instinctively know that that doesn't fit. Eye-color is dependant on the amount of melanin you have. The more melanine, the darker your eyes. A brown faced man with blue eyes is...unnatural.

Yes, Typhon has blond hair. Silk has reddish blonde hair (as exemplified by his beard-color). Chenille has "dark" hair, but she dyes it red. Red hair is a telling symbol....it identifies a "Typhonian" (technically, a vampire, but you get my drift). But in Chenille's case it also is a reminder that unless you've seen someone naked, you don't know if he/she is a real blonde or red-head. And Chenille has dark eyes, as Roy noted. So does the implication that Tussah had *blue* eyes mean she is not his "natural daughter." Nope. But it *is* contrary to what one would expect (more so in my case but I won't get into that). Nor can one know whether, even if Severian had reported that Typhon had blue eyes, that Typhon was born with that eye color. However, based on Roy's post, I made my first determined search for such a reference and I didn't *find* any evidence that Severian noted such a detail.

At this point, it would be reasonable for me to tie all this up and show how it is easily incorporates into my claim that Tussah and Horn are clones of Typhon. I can't. I arrived at that conviction based on other clues. But, Roy, you have offered no clear explanation of the meaning of this scene either: neither it's details nor the reasons for it's ambiguities. We've been here before, as I recall...in which you offered a puzzle that seems to make no definite sense no matter what one believes, and claimed it "proved" I'm wrong. It doesn't in this case either. It only proves that the actual situation has more complexities than my argument attempts to envelope.

I *can* say is that I'm dubious of how much can be made of issues like the color of eyes for these "souls", as I explained in my last series of posts. There is good reason to believe that the way souls appear in the Whorl segment is probably the way they *thought* of themselves rather than what is evident in their DNA. Tussah's blue eyes bother me. And Silk's blue eyes bother me. It ought to bother anyone who thinks about it.

J

mournings glory — 03 Aug 2005, 18:57 · in reply to James Wynn

Crush writes:

a) Only one man (it seems) speaks. He has "the carved brown face from [Silk's] mother's closet." He is also tall and blue-eyed. >

I don't agree with your parenthesis above. Or maybe I should say I understand why you believe it to be so. But there's also at least one other valid interpretation that can be made since Wolfe

quite shrewdly fails to attribute all the dialogue in the passage you cite.

You're assuming, I gather, that the following line is said by Silk's mother--who's pretty much overcome by joy and is crying her eyes out:

"You must go back, Silk. He sends us to tell you."

But isn't it equally possible that this could have been said by the tall, blue-eyed man? Because otherwise the next two paragraphs, it seems to me, are artifiically broken and should actually read as one, at least if all the dialogue is spoken by the same person--as you contend. I.e:

"You must, my lad." A man's voice, the voice of which Lemur's had been a species of mockery. Looking up he saw the carved brown face from his mother's closet. "We're your parents." He was tall and blue-eyed. "Your fathers and your mothers."

I've neither copy editing nor grammarian bona fides, but I just don't see why you would separate the two halves of Tussah's little speech here and not retain the single paragraph.

So here's how I see everybody saying what:

"Oh, Silk! My son! Oh, son!" She was in his arms and he in hers, melting in tears of joy. [Silk's Foster Mother]

"Mother!" [Silk]

"Silk, my son!" [SFM]

"You must go back, Silk. He sends us to tell you." [Tall, blue-eyed man.]

"You must, my lad." A man's voice, the voice of which Lemur's had been a species of mockery. Looking up he saw the carved brown face from his mother's closet. [Tussah]

"We're your parents." He was tall and blue-eyed. "Your fathers and your mothers." [TBEM]

One last followup question: do we ever learn (or can we figure out) what Silk's foster mother's name is? I can't recall if it's ever mentioned and she seems too important a character to go deliberately nameless.

msg (who has no dog in this fight, but still wants to point out that South Korea today announced it had successfully cloned a dog--after only 1000 failed attempts, all of which might be had for the cheap somewhere on the streets of Port Mimizon.)

David Duffy — 03 Aug 2005, 20:58 · in reply to James Wynn

On Wed, 3 Aug 2005, James Wynn wrote:

a) Only one man (it seems) speaks. He has "the carved brown face from [Silk's] mother's closet." He is also tall and blue-eyed. And...here is

c) But why do readers keep assuming that the man with the "carved brown face" and the man with the blue eyes are different? Because we instinctively know that that doesn't fit. Eye-color is dependant on the amount of melanin you have. The more melanine, the darker your eyes. A brown faced man with blue eyes is...unnatural.

It is possible that the carved brown face is made of wood -- the experience is pretty dreamy.

David Duffy.

Roy C. Lackey — 03 Aug 2005, 22:04 · follows David Duffy

Crush wrote:

c) But why do readers keep assuming that the man with the "carved brown face" and the man with the blue eyes are different? Because we instinctively know that that doesn't fit.<<

Before -- or if -- I respond further, and I probably shouldn't do this because I don't believe your interpretation in the least, I will point out that you have put a needless obstacle in your own path. No one that I know of has said Tussah had a brown face. I don't know what kind of complexion he had. Silk was speaking of the color of the bust itself. The whole thing was brown, and it was brown because it had been carved out of wood.

-Roy

don doggett — 03 Aug 2005, 22:14 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

--- "Roy C. Lackey" <rlackey at stic.net> wrote:

Crush wrote:

c) But why do readers keep assuming that the man with the "carved brown face" and the man with the blue eyes are different?

Because we instinctively know that that doesn't fit.<<

Before -- or if -- I respond further, and I probably shouldn't do this because I don't believe your interpretation in the least, I will point out that you have put a needless obstacle in your own path. No one that I know of has said Tussah had a brown face. I don't know what kind of complexion he had. Silk was speaking of the color of the bust itself. The whole thing was brown, and it was brown because it had been carved out of wood.

Ah, it seems true. Simply a poorly thought out sentence. Glad to know GW's human.

Don

James Wynn — 04 Aug 2005, 05:14 · in reply to don doggett

I always assumed that the face is called "carved brown" because Silk remembers the face from a wood cutting, not that the face is actually brown.

It is possible that the carved brown face is made of wood
-- the experience is pretty dreamy.

Before -- or if -- I respond further, and I probably shouldn't do this because I don't believe your interpretation in the least, I will point out that you have put a needless obstacle in your own path. No one that I know of has said Tussah had a brown face. I don't know what kind of complexion he had. Silk was speaking of the color of the bust itself. The whole thing was brown, and it was brown because it had been carved out of wood.

Perhaps y'all are right. (At least in this case I can't be accused of generating the evidence to fit a theory.) But I must point out that this is only the *first* time within the same volume that Tussah's *actual* face is closely associated with the coloring of the that bust in the closet.

The calde's carved countenance rose again before his mind's eye, and it seemed to him that he had seen it someplace else only a day or two before...had seen the caldee outside, because even without his lost glasses he had noticed the powder on the cheeks and flaws that the powder tried to cover--had seen him, in that case, under the auspices of the Outsider, in a sense. Epiphany of the Long Sun pg 287 (Calde)

"You're sunburned!" Inwardly, Silk reproached his own stupidity. "I've been looking at you--gaping actually, I suppose. I hope you'll excuse it, but I couldn't imagine how your face had gotten so red, so close to the red-brown color of a wood-carving my mother used to have." ~ Ibid, pg 290

Note that Chenille with her high cheek-bones ("flat cheeks") can herself be said to have "carved" features. So assuming that Chenille looks as much like Tussah as this text implies, we've confirmed that the "carved" adjective is not isolated to Tussah's bust.

Perhaps the brown color refers only to the bust. But the scenes read (red?) in conjunction begin to take on a suspicious pattern to me. But then again, the scenes might have been confusingly written.

J

James Wynn — 04 Aug 2005, 09:41 · follows James Wynn

The actual reference:

There! Two men and two women. He blinked and stared and blinked again.

"Oh, Silk! My son! Oh, son!" She was in his arms and he in hers, melting in tears of joy.

"Mother!" "Silk, my son!"

The whorl was filth and stink, futility and betrayal; this was everything--joy and love, freedom and purity.

"You must go back, Silk. He sends us to tell you."

"You must, my lad." A man's voice, the voice of which Lemur's had been a species of mockery. Looking up he saw the carved brown face from his mother's closet.

"We're your parents." He was tall and blue-eyed, "Your fathers and your mothers." The other woman did not speak, but her eyes spoke truth.

"You were my mother," he said. "I understand." He looked down at his own beautiful mother.

"You will always be my Mother . Always!"
"We'll be waiting, Silk my son. All of us. Remember."

I said:

a) Only one man (it seems) speaks. He has "the carved brown face from [Silk's] mother's closet." He is also tall and blue-eyed.

MSG responded:

I don't agree with your parenthesis above. Or maybe I should say I understand why you believe it to be so. But there's also at least one other valid interpretation that can be made since Wolfe quite shrewdly fails to attribute all the dialogue in the passage you cite.

It's feels awfully nice to have someone disagree with me while acknowledging I'm not making things up to fit a cock-eyed theory.

...isn't it equally possible that this could have been said by the tall, blue-eyed man? Because otherwise the next two paragraphs, it seems to me, are artificially broken and should actually read as one, at least if all the dialogue is spoken by the same person--as you contend. [shouldn't the paragraphs have >been constructed like this instead]:

"You must, my lad." A man's voice, the voice of which Lemur's had been a species of mockery. Looking up he saw the carved brown face from his mother's closet. "We're your parents." He was tall and blue-eyed. "Your fathers and your mothers."

[Rather than:

"You must, my lad." A man's voice, the voice of which Lemur's had been a species of mockery. Looking up he saw the carved brown face from his mother's closet. "We're your parents." He was tall and blue-eyed, "Your fathers and your mothers."]

Hmmm.

1) It is not at all uncommon for Wolfe to present dialog in which the same person speaks in two separate adjacent paragraphs. I'm not prepared to list them, but I always take note of them because I have to slow down and pay careful attention to who is saying what. However, it is not grammatically incorrect to do that. It is also not uncommon for Wolfe to identify a speaker once from the context of the dialog and then leave it to the reader to keep track of who is saying what from the context.

I can't think of another example where Wolfe has unattributed dialog without providing any real pointers as to who is saying it, as you suggest Wolfe has done with "You must go back, Silk. He sends us to tell you."

2) Here is where I throw it in the faces of those people who said my English degree would never be of any use. ;-) If the proper reading is as you say, that the man with the "carved brown face" from Silk's closet *is different* from the tall blue-eyed man, then Wolfe *is* guilty here a true grammatical error: a pronoun without an antecedent (that is, "He was tall and blue-eyed" does not identify even vaguely who "he" is). "He" might just as well refer to the Outsider (to whom I suppose is being referred when Silk's mother says "He sends us to tell you.") -- but it is a different thing to do that in dialog rather than in narration. On the other hand, if it is the man who spoke just previously and is described in the previous sentence, then "he" is identified.

3) You say Wolfe has quite shrewdly failed to attribute all the dialogue in the passage I cited. I don't think so, but I could be moved in your direction if I could be convinced of the *reasons* you believe Wolfe had for his shrewdness. I can't imagine why Wolfe would deliberately confuse who is speaking unless he had some purpose in confabulating who is speaking. And that brings me back to *my* theory.

If my reading is correct, then the text is grammatically well-constructed but confusing in exactly the way Wolfe's dialog so often (deliberately) is. If you???re reading is right (and it *does* require an intuitive leap to assign "He was tall and blue-eyed" to a hitherto undescribed man rather than the one described in the previous sentence), the passage dialog is seriously flawed, either deliberately or not.

One last follow-up question: do we ever learn (or can we figure out) what Silk's foster mother's name is? I can't recall if it's ever mentioned and she seems too important a character to go deliberately nameless.

I believe she is only called ???Mother, — like Seawrack???s mom. Incidentally, Hyacinth???s mother whom she meets in the Mainframe and whom she did not know was dead is also unnamed and seemingly unidentified.

msg (who has no dog in this fight, but still wants to point out that South Korea today announced it had successfully cloned a dog??? after only 1000 failed attempts, all of which might be had for the cheap somewhere on the streets of Port Mimizon.)

Were any of the failed attempts, six-legged dogs? ;-)

J

Roy C. Lackey — 04 Aug 2005, 11:45 · follows James Wynn

It is possible that the carved brown face is made of wood -- the experience is pretty dreamy.

David Duffy.

Ah, David, I see that you have preceded me. My apologies.

Crush quoted:

The calde's carved countenance rose again before his mind's eye, and it seemed to him that he had seen it someplace else only a day or two before...had seen the caldee outside, because even without his lost glasses he had noticed the powder on the cheeks and flaws that the powder tried to cover--had seen him, in that case, under the auspices of the Outsider, in a sense.

Epiphany of the Long Sun pg 287 (Calde)

There is another line of text immediately following the word "before" in the above quote that starts a new paragraph and which makes things clearer:

"Streaming sunlight, and cheeks that were not smooth wood but blotched and lightly pocked."

He was thinking of Chenille's face as he had seen it in a patch of sunlight when he talked to her in the arbor a day or two before. Her face was pocked, probably from acne, and she used facial powder to cover it up. Her face was so red in the second quoted scene because she had been

badly sunburned while naked in the boat on the lake, when she was possessed by Scylla. The wood the bust had been carved from was naturally reddish-brown, as the second quote you gave shows. There is no way to determine the color of the complexion of the face represented on the bust, no way to distinguish it from the rest of the wood.

-Roy

James Wynn — 04 Aug 2005, 17:12 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

Roy says:

There is another line of text immediately following the word "before" in the above quote that starts a new paragraph and which makes things clearer:

"Streaming sunlight, and cheeks that were not smooth wood but blotched and lightly pocked."

He was thinking of Chenille's face as he had seen it in a patch of sunlight when he talked to her in the arbor a day or two before. Her face was pocked, probably from acne, and she used facial powder to cover it up. Her face was so red in the second quoted scene because she had been badly sunburned while naked in the boat on the lake, when she was possessed by Scylla. The wood the bust had been carved from was naturally reddish-brown, as the second quote you gave shows. There is no way to determine the color of the complexion of the face represented on the bust, no way to distinguish it from the rest of the wood.

I guess I presumed the reference made it clear that Silk was looking at Chenille, but you are probably right that I should have clarified that. Also, the "flaws" her powder covered don't have to be acne, I suppose. It could be discoloration or...well...any number of things. I don't know.

But none of that affects my point which I will hammer again.

Silk was looking at Chenille's sunburned reddish-brown face and according to the literal reading of the text, was looking - in some sense - at the very face the calde'.

"The calde's carved countenance rose again before his mind's eye, and it seemed to him that he had seen it someplace else only a day or two before...[he] had seen him, in that case, under the auspices of the Outsider, in a sense."

The text says that Silk saw the face of the calde (saw it, as we both agree, in Chenille's face) a few days BEFORE this when Chenille's face had not been reddened by sunburn. Also, Silk says the bust in his closet was

reddish-brown, thus Chenille's face calls it to mind. But the face of the man Silk sees in his near-death experience is said to have been *brown* (not reddish-brown) as Chenille's would presumably have been a few days before.

My point is that there is a pattern of the *actual* face of the Calde' (whenever it is referred to) to be described as brown...and carved (ala "carved features"). Oh yes, it is certainly possible -- easy in fact -- to discount the precise reading of the text as literary flourishes in these cases. But that does at least require the additional act of *discounting* in order to do so. I have always found the parallels to be suggestive, and so in this case I'm inclined to believe when the narration says Silk saw a "carved brown face", a "carved brown face" is what he saw.

J

Roy C. Lackey — 04 Aug 2005, 22:37 · follows James Wynn

Crush wrote:

I guess I presumed the reference made it clear that Silk was looking at Chenille, but you are probably right that I should have clarified that. Also, the "flaws" her powder covered don't have to be acne, I suppose. It could be discoloration or...well...any number of things. I don't know.

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Silk was looking at Chenille's sunburned reddish-brown face and according to the literal reading of the text, was looking - in some sense - at the very face the calde'.

"The calde's carved countenance rose again before his mind's eye, and it seemed to him that he had seen it someplace else only a day or two before...[he] had seen him, in that case, under the auspices of the Outsider, in a sense."

Maybe it's because you're reading it piecemeal on amazon; I don't know. But I'm reading the text from the book. You have the sequence of events a little out of order. The two pieces of text you conflated above are what Silk was thinking as he was brought up from Blood's cellar by Potto and Sand and pushed into the room at the top of the cellar stairs. That room was "full of lounging soldiers and armored men." Silk had yet to lay eyes on Chenille that day, didn't even know she was in the house. Potto then pushed him into another room, the room where the meeting with Marble, Blood, Loris and the others was to take place, the room where Blood was killed. It was only then he saw Chenille, page 336 of the Tor paperback. It's another four pages before Silk realized that she was sunburned and made the connection between her red face and the color of the wood-carving he had been thinking of earlier. He even said then, "It's just that Chenille has reminded me of a childhood incident, Councillor."

Maybe it's irrelevant to your point, but that is "the precise reading of the text".

Earlier I wrote:

"There is no way to determine the color of the complexion of the face represented on the bust, no way to distinguish it from the rest of the wood."

Have you an answer for that? If you don't, then any conclusions drawn about the color of any of the features of the bust are meaningless, because it's all the same color.

-Roy

James Wynn — 12 Aug 2005, 05:42 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

Roy said

You have the sequence of events a little out of order. The two pieces of text you conflated above are what Silk was thinking as he was brought up from Blood's cellar by Potto and Sand and pushed into the room at the top of the cellar stairs. That room was "full of lounging soldiers and armored men." Silk had yet to lay eyes on Chenille that day, didn't even know she was in the house. Potto then pushed him into another room, the room where the meeting with Marble, Blood, Loris and the

others was to take place, the room where Blood was killed.

I've been trying to figure out how you have divided the room "full of lounging soldiers and armored men" from the room with Chenille, Marble, Blood, etc. I've read the scene over and over and it is pretty clear that they are one in the same. Perhaps it is different in your edition?

+++++

"This way," Potto told him, and pushed him through a door and into a gorgeous room full of lounging soldiers..." [...] "The calde's carved countenance rose again before his mind's eye..." [...] Blood and Maytera Marble were sitting side-by-side when Potto shoved Silk into the room; he was so surprised to see her for a moment he failed to notice Chenille, Xiphias, and a drooping augur lined up against the wall. ~ Epiphany of the Long Sun (Calde) pg 286

+++++

There is *no* description of a third room.

None. The obvious implication from the totality of the scene is that when Silk enters the room he sees Chenille but does not "notice" her. But he does see her and so the "calde's carved countenance rose before his mind's eye".

Maybe it's irrelevant to your point, but that is "the precise reading of the text".

I think it probably is irrelevant to both my point and yours. So I don't know why you brought it up. But I've clarified it in case it proves useful.

Earlier I wrote:

"There is no way to determine the color of the complexion of the face represented on the bust, no way to distinguish it from the rest of the wood."

Have you an answer for that? If you don't, then any conclusions drawn about the color of any of the features of the bust are meaningless, because it's all the same color.

I don't see why are having so much difficulty in this. There are three "faces" in this and the near-death scene. "The calde", the sculpture (red-brown), and Chenille (with her powder covering her flaws two days before and with a red-brown sunburned face now).

Silk enters a room with Chenille's sunburned face and recalls "calde's carved countenance". I'm not confabulating anything. Wolfe did. At the same moment, he speculates that he has seen the calde' himself only days before (when seeing Chenille). So on this same page, Wolfe confabulates Chenille's face with the sculpture's face and then Chenille's face with the calde's. In his near-death experience Wolfe confabulates the face of the calde with that of the sculpture.

The obvious implication...almost flatly stated in fact...is that when looking at the face of Chenille, one is *somehow* looking at the face of the calde. The only reason no one has made much of in IMO is that accepting it requires pretty wild speculating.

So it is not necessary for the sculpture to have Chenille's facial "flaws". At that time (and the "precise reading of the text" is clear about this) Chenille's face was being confabulated with the calde's.

I

Crush wrote:

I've been trying to figure out how you have divided the room "full of lounging soldiers and armored men" from the room with Chenille, Marble, Blood, etc. I've read the scene over and over and it is pretty clear that they are one in the same. Perhaps it is different in your edition?

No, it isn't different in any edition. There are two rooms in question here, the one "full of lounging soldiers and armored men" and the room where the meeting was held and Blood died. It isn't a matter of opinion. If you need further elaboration, it exists.

When Marble came to the front door of the house, the door was opened and she saw that the room it opened on contained "soldiers, and bios in silvered armor." (CALDE, Tor paperback, 327) Blood was standing behind them. She goes on to describe the room as "the hall". Following some banter with Blood, who wanted some privacy, he said to her (next page):

"You'd probably like to sit. I know I would. Come in here, and I think we can settle this."
He showed her into a paneled drawing room and shut the door firmly. "My boys are getting edgy," he explained, "and that gets me edgy around them."

-Roy

James Wynn — 12 Aug 2005, 22:06 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

But, Roy, whatever the floorplan this passage causes you to imagine, surely the passage that starts with...

"This way," Potto told him, and pushed him through a door and into a gorgeous room full of lounging soldiers..."

and ends with...

"Blood and Maytera Marble were sitting side-by-side when Potto shoved Silk into the room; he was so surprised to see her for a moment he failed to notice Chenille, Xiphias, and a drooping augur lined up against the wall."

...is the relevant one and that passage makes it clear that Silk is only passing from one room to another, and the entire group is sitting in the "gorgeous room full of lounging soldiers". Otherwise, you have to *imagine* Silk, Potto, and Sand filing into a "hall" (an event not described) containing not just Marble and Blood but literally everybody else as well. And this "hall" contains shelves with knick-knacks and a window as well.

No, it isn't different in any edition. There are two rooms in question here, the one "full of lounging soldiers and armored men" and the room where he meeting was held and Blood died. It isn't a matter of opinion. If you need further elaboration, it exists.

When Marble came to the front door of the house, the door was opened and she saw that the room it opened on contained "soldiers, and bios in silvered armor." (CALDE, Tor paperback, 327) Blood was standing behind them. She goes on to describe the room as "the hall". Following some banter with Blood, who wanted some privacy, he said to her (next page):

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boys are getting edgy," he explained, "and that gets me edgy around them."

Roy C. Lackey — 13 Aug 2005, 10:17 · follows James Wynn

Crush wrote:

But, Roy, whatever the floorplan this passage causes you to imagine, surely the passage that starts with...

"This way," Potto told him, and pushed him through a door and into a gorgeous room full of lounging soldiers..."

and ends with...

"Blood and Maytera Marble were sitting side-by-side when Potto shoved Silk into the room; he was so surprised to see her for a moment he failed to notice Chenille, Xiphias, and a drooping augur lined up against the wall."

...is the relevant one and that passage makes it clear that Silk is only passing from one room to another, and the entire group is sitting in the "gorgeous room full of lounging soldiers".

No, James. No. Two rooms are involved. The hall (also called the foyer by Marble), which contained a landscape by Murtagon, the "gorgeous room full of lounging soldiers". And the drawing room, where Blood took Marble and the meeting with the others subsequently took place.

Otherwise, you have to *imagine*

Silk, Potto, and Sand filing into a "hall" (an event not described) containing not just Marble and Blood but literally everybody else as well.

No. Marble and Blood were not in the hall when Silk was brought up from the cellar. They were in the drawing room, which was reached by a door from the hall. The soldiers and troopers were in the hall.

Blood wanted to speak with Marble/Rose in private. That's why he left the hall full of soldiers and went into the drawing room with her. There are references in their conversation that make it crystal clear that the soldiers are not in the same room:

Marble: "Here in private you may call me a trull or a trollop . . ."

and

Marble: ". . . I saw a lot of slug guns out there in your foyer."

Later, after Blood told Marble he would set up the meeting, is when the dazed and confused Silk was pushed by Potto into the drawing room. That is when he saw Marble, Blood, Chenille, Xiphias, Incus and Loris. Potto and Sand came into the room with Silk. After introductions, Sand was dismissed by Potto. He left the room, "shutting the door behind him." That's everyone present, until Oreb flew in through the open window. There are several references that, again, make clear that the soldiers and troopers are out in the hall. But I'm not going to bother to list them. I've wasted far too much time and effort already. I'll give just one. When Loris shattered the marble bookend it made a loud noise. "The door flew open, revealing Sand and two other soldiers with leveled slug guns." Potto said, "It's all right. Shut it." (338)

When Marble came to the front door of the house, the door was opened and she saw that the room it opened on contained "soldiers, and bios in

silvered armor." (CALDE, Tor paperback, 327) Blood was standing behind them. She goes on to describe the room as "the hall". Following some banter with Blood, who wanted some privacy, he said to her (next page):

"You'd probably like to sit. I know I would. Come in here, and I think we can settle this."

He showed her into a paneled drawing room and shut the door firmly. "My boys are getting edgy," he explained, "and that gets me edgy around them."

The drawing room was emptied again later of all but Silk and Marble, so that they could have a private talk. During that talk was when Blood elected to sneak outside the house and re-enter the drawing room through the window. In the wake of his firing of an azoth, "the door flew in with a crash". "From behind Sergeant Sand and a second soldier equally large, Potto barked, '_Shoot him_!'" (366) That, of course, is what led to the two soldiers turning around and shooting Potto.

I don't think that even you believe that two councillors and Blood would discuss their schemes and criminal activities in the presence of soldiers and troopers.

Lost in all of this is your point about when Silk was thinking what, and when he saw Chenille for the first time that day. The one-or-two room issue is irrelevant to all but your reading of an admittedly confusing passage. I've established that there were two rooms, and I explained it all earlier.

Those are the facts. I can do no more.

-Roy