

narrator in Fifth Head

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 02 Apr 1998

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Ron Crown, St. Louis University — 02 Apr 1998, 08:55

Further clues on narrator's identity: The name of his clone-sister is Jeanine; by the naming convention for siblings we see elsewhere in Wolfe (e.g. Severian-Severa), this should make the narrator "Jean." Technically, this becomes "John" in English but the French pronunciation of "Jean" is similar to English "Gene." (Note also the story "Procreation" in Endangered Species where two narrators, "Gene" and his sister, appear allowing Wolfe to pun on the story's theme of creation).

For the last name "Wolfe," we have the name of the house where the narrator lives, "Maison du chien;" "chien" means "dog" normally but can also mean "wolf" (I checked).

The thought occurs to me, if the narrator's name is Jean, then what is his brother's name, who is presumably also a clone. I think that it's reasonable to suppose the clones are numbered; indeed, the title should alert us to that. Then, the narrator is Jean-5? and his brother is Jean 6? (I can't remember if the brother is younger or older).

Ron Crown
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Pedro Jorge Romero — 02 Apr 1998, 18:54 · follows Ron Crown, St. Louis University

The thought occurs to me, if the narrator's name is Jean, then what is his brother's name, who is presumably also a clone. I think that it's reasonable to suppose the clones are numbered; indeed, the title should alert us to that. Then, the narrator is Jean-5? and his brother is Jean 6? (I can't remember if the brother is younger or older).

First time in here. Just to say that my idea was always that the brother was not a clone but rather a control in the experiment. But, who is Number 1?

Great list. Always fun to read.

Best

Pedro Jorge