

# Whatever Happened to Auntie Jane? (AEG spoilers)

The Urth list — 2 messages, 1 voices, 12 Nov 2008

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5221>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

---

Dave Tallman — 12 Nov 2008, 19:03

It's interesting to try to connect the love triangles in Cassie's plays with her real life.

In "The Red Spot," Brad Kingsley (Bruce Sandoz) is married to Jane Simmons (Alexis Cabana). In "Dating the Volcano God," Reverend Brownlee (Brian Keene-- note the B.K. initial match and the first-name match with Brian Pickens) is married to Jane Brownlea (Norma Peiper and later Tabbi Merce). Mariah Browlea (Cassie Casey) dates sailor Mr. Sharpy (Gil Corby aka Gideon Chase) and the Volcano God (Vince Palma).

Cassie supplants both Janes. Bruce Sandoz is attracted to Cassie, and his character may be also. She certainly steals the applause from Alexis in her last performance, effectively becoming the lead: "By this time you'd be Jane Simmons" (p. 54). Aunt Jane Brownlea is in love with the Volcano God ("And how I love his boiling lava..." p. 138), but since Cassie plays the leading lady she clearly supplants her in this relationship.

There is a cat-image connection among some of the leading men. Bruce Sandoz is "like a famished lion" (p. 52). Vince Palma "pounced" and steers Cassie like a "cruel tomcat might steer a captive mouse" (p. 63). He has a "be-ringed paw" (p. 64), and a "tomcat smile" (p. 285) and he dances with a "breathtaking series of leaps" (p. 286). Bill Reis is compared to a "friendly tiger" (p. 77), and dating him is like playing footsie with a tiger to find out how he bites their necks (p. 72). Norma calls him an "alpha male," a term frequently used of lions (p. 177).

We can definitely connect Reis to the Volcano God, given the parallel between the play's title and the chapter title "Dating Wallace Rosenquist" p. 115. The Volcano God is Reis as he is now: powerful and dangerous. The Volcano God who comes to Cassie's aid after Reis dies (pp. 285-287) may be a manifestation of his spirit. Reverend Brownlee is Reis as he used to be: a missionary is an ambassador of sorts. Another Brian (Brian Pickens) was killed by the cultist assassin, who really wants to kill Bill Reis (p. 250). Norma's role is taken over by Tabbi (a cat-like name).

Sharon Bench knows Rian Reis well enough to comment on his being "too brave" (p.26). She has talked to former wife of Bill Reis and expects Cassie may have chance to talk with her, even before Reis appears on the scene ("...you won't brace them with it" p. 25). So the ex Mrs. Reis may well be somebody Cassie knows. Bill's wife picked the name "Rian" (p. 277). Rian and Norma are both Gaelic names.

Given all these connections, there's a possibility that Norma Peiper is the ex-wife of Bill Reis and the mother of Rian Reis. This gives more of a motive for her murder by the ATF than just showing Cassie they are serious, and more of a motive for Reis to avenge her death in person.

---

Dave Tallman — 13 Nov 2008, 16:02 · follows Dave Tallman

There is direct evidence that Norma is Bill's ex -- she comes right out and says it: "I used to be married to the volcano god. Did you know?" (p. 176).

Cassie misunderstands and asks "Vince?", and Norma chooses not to correct her, but we can see that "volcano god" is not capitalized, so we know she doesn't mean Vince. Reis wrote the play (p. 268) and no doubt intended the Volcano God character to represent himself. Norma would know that.

Bill Reis was married twice before (p. 275). We can reconstruct that Norma was Bill's first wife, not the one who accompanied him to Woldercan (p. 301). Their son Rian is sixteen (p. 276), the marriage only lasted two years (p. 176), and Bill's appointment as ambassador to Woldercan only recently ended, during the term of the current President (p. 19). It would also be difficult to get much medical help for a child with a defective heart valve (p. 277) in a place so remote that even tampons are hard to get (p. 298). "Nobody could cure him" (p. 26) implies lots of doctors, so we can assume Rian was raised on Earth. The second wife may have died on Woldercan or divorced him there and returned to Earth. In the picture where he announces he will retire (p. 14), Reis seems to be alone.

In spite of Norma saying that there were no hard feelings (p. 176), she still has negative things to say about Bill, "...what he really wanted wasn't a wife, it was a servant who screwed." I think this assessment of his relationships with women may be accurate. If his enemies are telling the truth, he has blackmailed for sexual favors (p. 17). He condescends to Cassie more than once: "Do you really think I want you, Cassie, for the same reason I want Chase?" (p. 147) and "You're a trusting woman, and I love you for it. That doesn't mean I'd put you in an executive position. I wouldn't. It's not what you're cut out for" (p. 269). This is in contrast to Chase, who is condescending as well but at least a bit respectful of her insights: "You're not at all intellectual... but every so often you show the most marvelous penetration" (p. 222). I may want to reassess my idea of Reis as a Christ figure; he may be a false Christ.

Reis chose to have Norma in the play as Aunt Jane, and this may have been a bit of spite. She has to sing a song about loving the Volcano God ("And how I love his boiling lava..." p. 138). Hers is not a happy part -- Aunt Jane is only supposed to smile once in the whole show (p. 131). Norma is uncertain if she will be kept in the show for long (p. 178).

A whole new possibility opens up. We know that the ATF uses ex-spouses (p. 193). The sniper was set up on the roof of a building about three hundred yards away (p. 180), which required advanced knowledge of the path the women would take. It was Norma who got Cassie to walk with her that night (p. 175) and she seemed to know the way better than Cassie, who said "Another darned old alley!" (p. 178). Could Norma have been leading Cassie into an ambush and gotten shot by mistake (or on purpose, betrayed by the ATF)?