

Fifth Head of Cerberus

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 01 Jun 1998

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adam louis stephanides — 01 Jun 1998, 14:27

Robert Borski writes:

later, when the junior officer assigned to review Marsch/VRT's case reads of Marsch's being scratched by thorns after an encounter with the tire-tiger, he interrupts his reading and goes back and specifically rereads the two sentences about the shriek.

Actually he just "glanced at the first few pages..."

But then I went back to VRT and picked up the narrative, with the junior officer coming back to Marsch's journal, which he has put down, no doubt having free associated Marsch's mention of thorns with Roncevaux (again, French for thorns).

I think the officer puts down the journal because he remembers "Marsch's" changed handwriting (i. e. VRT's handwriting) as being similar to the writing in VRT's composition book, and wants to check. That's why he only glances at a few pages before returning, satisfied, to the journal. The discrepancy between Marsch's real handwriting and the writing in the composition book is presumably why the officer at first doubts that the journal is actually by "Marsch" (195 in the Ace edition, in which "V. R. T." runs from pp. 149-270).

mantis writes:

In addition, Cassilla seems like an abo, from what we know about abo female prostitutes (shape shifting, make themselves ugly when they aren't in the mood, green eyes? [Is this an echo of their world color, the green of Sainte Anne? If so, gee, blue eyes might be for Sainte Croix.]).

I don't get any of this from the two Cassilla passages I found (214, 267). And if Cassilla can make herself unattractive at will, it seems like she would certainly do so to get out of the session with the officer, after just having spend two hours with the major and having to get up early next morning.

And Cassilla might be the presumed dead cat-girl, working out her revenge upon the traitor-to-his-race-and-girlfriend Marsh/V.R.T. With Number Five the doomed heir of the only "pure" humans left.

You and Robert Borski both believe that the cat followed Marsch and V.R.T. is the same as the Annese girl Marsch is convinced V.R.T. is dallying with. While I can see evidence for this, I'm not convinced. To start with, there's a problem with conservation of matter. And what's V.R.T.'s motive for killing the girl? He supposedly kills the cat as part of a funerary ceremony for "the boy"--i.e. Marsch--and it seems unlikely he would kill one of the Free People for the benefit of an Earthman he doesn't particularly like, especially if he did murder Marsch.

My guess as to what happened is that Marsch did catch V.R.T. with the girl and tried to kill them, as he said he would in his journal (251), and V.R.T. killed Marsch in

self-defence. The girl just dropped out of the story.

--Adam

mary whalen — 01 Jul 1998, 19:13 · follows adam louis stephanides

note: forwarded msg attached.