

5HC--le notebook

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 02 Jun 1998

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m.driussi — 02 Jun 1998, 04:07

I'm supposed to make some stab at the notebook mystery outlined in CAVE CANEM: that is, regarding the missing first three pages of Marsch's notebook, cut with a very sharp knife.

The material at the front must be a journal of the first few days of Marsch on Sainte Anne: from splashdown in the ocean to Roncevaux, since the journal after the cut talks about Marsch being already in the next town, Frenchman's Landing.

Who cut them, with what, and why?

I don't know!

But I'll start with V.R.T. himself.

What would V.R.T. want to cut out from the front? Maybe something which he had memorized as a false memory, something that he didn't want others to have as a script--maybe an Earthman's impressions of the town of Roncevaux, the train ride to Frenchman's Landing, etc. That is, the words V.R.T. rattles off when they question him later.

This seems somewhat weak. Maybe there was an interview which revealed too much about V.R.T.--could Marsch have accidentally interviewed Mrs. T? That seems a stretch.

Then again, things were lost in the outback. A lot of tape recordings, only some of which had been transcribed (presumably by Marsch himself before his death).

As for the cutting tool, I nominate the razor in the shaving kit listed in the supplies.

Next, what if Marsch cut it?

That would mean that there was something there he didn't want V.R.T. to see. Unless we think that he thought he was going to die and didn't want some secret, like "I am a spy" written across the first three pages, to be discovered after his death. <g>

No, I don't think Marsch cut it. Even if he was a spy, especially if he was a spy, he wouldn't have written anything revealing in those pages. Unless he was an unwitting agent and had been approached by someone in Roncevaux and had agreed to take a package to x or whatever. But even then he wouldn't have cut it out--Robert Borski is right, it is probably the agent in Laon.

Note: the name Roncevaux is associated with the death of a major hero (Roland), just as "Nessus" is associated with the death of a major hero (Herakles).

So, as Robert Borski asks, what happened at Roncevaux? Even though the original has been destroyed, we have a copy in the form of V.R.T. himself--at the very least he read and

internalized the material before it was cut. It seems likely that he has alluded to events in Roncevaux, either during the interviews, or in his own writings, or in "A Story."

Who is the agent at Laon? We know Marsch/V.R.T. sold his equipment, bought some clothes, got his beard trimmed, and radiogrammed a message to R. Trenchard in Frenchman's Landing (about the "death" of his son V.R.T. in the back of beyond) at Laon. That sounds like four possible agents right there. In order to recognize the bearded V.R.T., the agent must have seen Marsch before. Could it be that another Culot, son of the Culot interviewed by Marsch in Frenchman's Landing, runs a similar clothing store at Laon (which is a coastal city to the south of Frenchman's Landing)?

Well, whoever cut the beard (if anyone really did--Marsch/V.R.T. makes this claim and we have reason to believe he just wills the beard to whatever length) would have sharp razors to cut things out. But if the =agent= cut stuff out then said agent would appear to be a double agent!

So, according to this thought, whoever cut the pages didn't want them to fall into the hands of the Laon agent and thence into the hands of Sainte Croix.

Adam was asking about "A Story." We read it first as the anthropological fiction "reconstruction of a lost world" it purports to be, then we learn that it is the fantasy of a criminal in solitary confinement and questionable sanity. And dubious anthropology. But knowing that, if we go back into "A Story" and ignore the anthro and read it as the dreamy confessional autobiography of a murderer, we may find some more pieces to the espionage thriller of "V.R.T."

I don't know.

Time for a detailed timeline of Marsch and Marsch/V.R.T.

=mantis=

P.S. 2-15-2, "Fifth of September," the suppressed political faction on Sainte Croix. This sounds to me like Russian revolution stuff, or early Japanese coup attempt stuff--both used the dates as their names, I think (the Japanese I'm sure of). In Proust terms, the relevant item is "the Dreyfus Affair" which was a heady combination of spying charges (info to the Germans, I believe) and anti-Semitism that shook France pretty hard. Dreyfus himself was out at Devil's Island.

For "anti-Semitism" we could easily substitute "anti-abo"? Or "anti-faux-French"?

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