

5HC: Maitre triumphant?

The Urth list — 2 messages, 1 voices, 15 Jun 1998

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William H. Ansley — 15 Jun 1998, 01:14

Forgive me if what follows is too obvious but has anyone else who has read 5HC thought that Maitre may have, in a way, achieved his goal of "ruling" St. Croix without realizing it?

First of all, it seems likely that a great many people on St. Croix bear "Wolfe genes" perhaps most of the general population. This is why there is a "St. Croix" planetary face (which is Number 5's/Maitre's/Mr. Millions's face). This is due to Maitre's (and his predecessors', we can presume) practice of selling off his (their) "pratice" clones in his (their) role as child broker or slave broker. There is probably a higher percentage of Maitre's genes circulating in the St. Croix gene pool than is true of any other individual on any other planet in the 5HC universe.

There seem to be a lot of "Wolfe genes" among government functionaries: all three of the government representatives waiting for Marsch in his room when he is arrested look "Wolfe-ish". If we agree that Maitre loves intrigue and duplicity or that it seems likely that he does, then this mental aspect of his seems to be genetic as well, since the "Wolfe-ish" slave is mentioned (at the end of "V. R. T.") as also loving these qualities for their own sake.

This may be one reason the government of St. Croix is so full of intrigue and duplicity itself.

Even if this is true and Maitre realized it, I'm sure it wouldn't have made any difference in his plans.

William Ansley

William H. Ansley — 16 Jun 1998, 01:02 · follows William H. Ansley

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I guess that would depend on the status of the children born of slaves fathered (or mothered) by the owners.

I am not sure that all of the GW trial clones were sold as slaves. While it may be true that the brisk business in children in Port-Mimizon (and elsewhere on St. Croix) is mainly to provide fodder for unsavory practices and the little victims will be discarded after being "used up" or children to be raised as slaves, it seems possible that some people may buy children because they can't have their own and these children may become part of the family legally and are the heirs of their adoptive parents. The status of slaves notwithstanding, unless we see a very selective group of individuals in 5HC, there are an awful lot who look like Number 5/Maitre.

And there is the business of the planetary face: (p. 34 Scribner's ed.)

... Here, most of us have a kind of planetary face, except for the gypsies and the criminal tribes, and you don't seem to fit the pattern."

He [Dr. Marsch] said, "I've noticed what you mean; you seem to have it yourself."

"I'm supposed to look a great deal like my father."

This implies, at least to me, that a majority of people on St. Croix look "Wolfe-ish". Now, this may not be because they have genes derived from GW clones; but it is suggestive.

Here's **another** mystery of 5HC. The next line after the passage quoted above (spoken by Marsch) is:

"Ah," he said. He stared at me. Then, "Are you cloned?"

Why would Marsch say this, especially since the conversation just before seems to be leading to a sort of "Isn't it funny how alike everybody looks on this planet" conclusion? Even more strange, since it seems as certain as anything in 5HC that the Marsch here is really VRT impersonating Marsch, how does an ignorant boy (who may be only half human) come up with this guess? Sure, he's been studying Marsch's books, but would anthropological relaxation be a major part of any of them. Has Marsch memorized (and mastered) everything in all the books?

Oh, well, I'm not sure even (the real) Gene Wolfe could answer all of our questions about 5HC, even if he would.

William Ansley