

Three Fingers: Sometimes a Pipe...

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

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Dan'l Danehy Oakes — 15 Jun 1998, 09:07

It seems to me that "Three Fingers" -- oddly for a Wolfe story -- is just what it seems. That is, Adam's theory #2 comes closest to the mark:

2) "Michael Mauss" is sane and the "Mickey Mafia" really gets him, just like it says in the story. Supporting this is that hallucinations are one of the side effects of reserpine. I don't like this because it leaves too many questions unanswered. Why would the Disney people dress up as Disney characters to catch Michael? And why pretend they're going to kill him?

Hokay, let's take this one point at a time.

First and foremost, what on earth gives you the eyedea that they're _pretending_? And, similarly, the knowtion that they're "dressed up" as Disney characters?

I guess I have to back this up, so here's an interpretive principle that I find useful in dealing with Wolfe's texts; call it the Roach Principle

The "deep meaning" of a Wolfean text is most likely to be identical with its "surface meaning" precisely when that "surface meaning" seems most unlikely.

Basic interpretation of "Three Fingers": The Disney characters (and most particularly the Disney villains) are real and are exactly what they seem. There is nothing under the mask. Michael Mauss has made the fatal mistake of trading in the Disney Magic[^](tm).

You have to know how fiercely these people protect their trademarks to feel this story. We're talking about a company that brought suit against an urban daycare center because they'd hand-painted Disney characters on the walls. (To their infinite credit, the good people at Warner's helped settle the suit, and paid for repainting the place -- in Warner cartoon characters, for which they didn't charge royalties 8*)).

Actually, in line with the Roach Principle, it is quite possible that Adam's #3 is also correct, that "Mauss" is in fact Mickey Mouse; but I'd have to reread the story to decide on this one, and I don't have time right now -- I'm wrapping up for a long vacation, during which I hope to finally get around to "Castlevuew," "Pandora," and "Storeys," and maybe even the one-more-reading of PEACE I need to do in order to make my case for "Weer in Purgatory" as the bestest reading...

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| Dan'l Danehy-Oakes | First Amendment Pop Quiz: |

| Staff Curriculum Developer | |

| Oracle World-Wide Education | Is it all right to shout |

| e-mail ddanehyo at us.oracle.com | "movie" in a crowded firehouse? |

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