

fan fiction

The Urth list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 24 Jun 1998

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Alice Turner — 24 Jun 1998, 19:31

With due respect, Sarge, sir, this becomes a ridiculous argument, similar to that of science-meister scolex. The two of you are replacing Wolfe's text with text of your own, yours involving an elaborate background for Marsch and his for Aunt Jeanine. There a word for that, and it isn't analysis, it's fan fiction (okay, two words).

We know that the text of the second two novellas in 5th Head is, to some degree, unreliable--I just think it's more unreliable than most participants of this list do. I believe that "A Story" and "V.R.T." are calculated disinformation (while the first novella is merely a self-serving autobiography). So of course my defense against your attack, my dear green friend, is to assert that Marsch wrote about the boy's green eyes (and his mother's matching ones, and the stuff about abos having green eyes in "A Story") precisely because he himself has such green eyes. In fact, it must be that many Annese have green eyes (maybe they interbred with abos, and acquired this trait). Marsch hopes, if not to convince his captors, at least to distract them, to give them something else to think about than his mission. Yes, it's circular...but that's my point.

And what color are alga's eyes?

Mud-colored. And I must warn you, sir, that fraternization between ranks is inappropriate behavior.

"I have examined your papers, and letters follow your name. I shall call you:

'A Polish Count, a Knight Grand Cross,
Rx. and Q.E.D.;
Grand Master of the Blood Red Dirk,
and R.O.G.U.E.'

You seem to me very young."

This is a real head-banger. What does it mean? First of all, it's in quotes. Does that mean it is a quote from somewhere? If so, can anyone identify it?

I think the poem everyone "almost" remembers is the one by Dorothy Parker which ends "And I am Marie of Rumania." Alas, I can't find it in my two light verse collections which both lean heavily on dead Brits, but it's not bad. It puts in verse that fairly standard expression of scorn that goes more or less "Well, if he's a successful you-name-it, I'm the Queen of England!" (Funnier from a male, and goes back at least to Gilbert & Sullivan.) Maybe one of us has a more American light verse collection, or a Parker collection, and can look it up. It's pretty well known. Wolfe is, I think, just doing his own verse in the tradition.

From Adam:

Is there any hint in "V.R.T." of the folklore behind the Shadow Children in "A Story?" I can't think of anyone in Marsch's interviews distinguishing more than two kinds of abos (Hill and Meadowmere) -- nor any mention of telepathic abilities, addiction to a particular plant, etc. Maybe the author made 'em up entirely, inspired by the constellation.

But then where did the constellation's name come from?

Why was V.R.T. so sloppy in writing down memories of his own childhood on St. Anne in what was supposed to be Marsch's journal?

On p. 230 (Ace edition) V.R.T. says he now thinks nobody may be reading his prison writings after all. It's only after this that he writes about his childhood on St. Anne.

Yes, I think this is right. The Shadow Children are to the Annese almost as the Annese are to the colonists.

-alga-

Tony Ellis — 25 Jun 1998, 09:10 · follows Alice Turner

Alga wrote:

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Absolutely. Once you start writing your own story into the gaps in someone else's, it's really not that hard to find connections suggesting that it was there all along. "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead" is a classic example of what I mean.

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This live Brit has found it in his book of quotations, but unless this is just an extract I'm not convinced it's what Wolfe had in mind:

Comment

Oh, life is a glorious cycle of song,
A medley of extemporanea;
And love is a thing that can never go wrong;
And I am Marie of Rumania.

Michael Straight — 25 Jun 1998, 10:38 · follows Tony Ellis

On Thu, 25 Jun 1998, Tony Ellis wrote:

Alga wrote:

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Or maybe URTH OF THE NEW SUN?

-Rostrum

Ranjit Bhatnagar — 25 Jun 1998, 10:24 · follows Michael Straight

Tony Ellis:

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Rostrum:

Or maybe URTH OF THE NEW SUN?

Or ENDYMION/RISE OF ENDYMION, which completely rewrote HYPERION/FALL OF HYPERION and also PISSED ME OFF.

[Hyperion, Fall of Hyperion, Endymion, Rise of Endymion, by Dan Simmons. Read the first two!]