

# Gene Wolfe - some spoilers

The Usenet list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 02 Dec 1984

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/usenet/25>

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Laurence C. Roberts — 02 Dec 1984, 05:09

I've enjoyed the recent discussions of Gene Wolfe's Book\_of\_the\_New\_Sun\_.

I've read ( and re-read) this and a fair ammount of Wolfe's other work. Has anyone out there read The\_Fifth\_Head\_of\_Cerberus\_? Has anyone read both that book and Silverberg's \_Lord\_Valentine's\_Castle\_? Did it seem to you as if LVC lifted certain concepts from Fifth Head - note the similarity of the Annese to Silverberg's Metamorphs, and the underlying theme in both books of metamorphasis

- in Fifth Head from generation to generation of clones (#5) and from VRT to Marsch , and in LVC from the old Valentine to the new. And, although I'm no Heinlein fan, what about Michael Valentine Smith's Castle? Well, perhaps I'm paranoid.

Is it possible that there never was a Marsch in the first place, that VRT made him up? I havn't re-read the book since I heard this hypothesis, but even if there aren't any contradictions to it, it sounds kind of shaky. Of course, you've probably noticed the marsch-men pun in "A Story" . Then again, how about March's green eyes? Was there a handwriting change in the journals in part 3?

One analysis I read mentions that scenery in "A Story" also appears in "VRT" (part 3). I never noticed this before - I'll have to watch next time.

Now a few New Sun things... What about the second time the Green Man was supposed to save Severian's life? Has anyone heard when \_The\_Urth\_of\_the\_New\_Sun\_ is coming out? What is \_The\_Wolfe\_Archipeligo\_?

Does anyone out there read Thomas Disch or Somtow Sucharitkul? They are both marvelously literate authors. What's your opinion of Wolfe and Disch (among others) publishing unaffordable collectors editions that you'd be afraid to read for fear of damaging them, even if you could afford them... I'm not even talking about \$18 hardbacks ( although those are bad enough ) . I'm complaining about \$100 books, and somewhat about Disch's booklets like \_Ringtime\_ for Toothpaste Press... Opinions?

Laurence Roberts  
ihnp4!stolaf!roberts!

"Ifrit first you don't succeed, fly, fly a djinn!"

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Kenn Barry — 06 Dec 1984, 21:43 · in reply to Laurence C. Roberts

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... What's your opinion of Wolfe and Disch (among others) publishing unaffordable collectors editions that you'd be afraid to read for fear of damaging them, even if you could afford them... I'm not even talking about \$18 hardbacks ( although those are bad enough ) . I'm complaining about \$100 books, and somewhat about Disch's booklets like \_Ringtime\_ for

Toothpaste Press... Opinions?

Why would you want to complain? You're not required to buy the expensive collector's editions. These books almost invariably come out in large trade editions, as well, or in paperback. The only ones that don't are those which wouldn't have a mass audience. In such cases high prices are inevitable, since you're unable to prorate the costs of publishing over a large print run.

The main reasons these editions are expensive is that they are limited editions, and they (usually) are better made than trade editions.

The reason they're published at all is that there are collectors who are willing to pay the high prices for them. I've paid more than \$100.00 for some books, and I have no complaints.

Having roasted you adequately, let me back down a bit. I *\*have\** seen cases where there has been an unconscionably long delay between the publishing of the collector's edition, and later publishing of the trade edition. This seems to be an effort to boost sales of the expensive version by withholding the affordable copies, and I consider it a low practice. Lest the libertarians flame me, I should add that publishers have a right to do it; but I don't have to like it.

- From the Crow's Nest - Kenn Barry  
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