

Bloody Hell

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 04 Jul 1997

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/394>

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David Langford — 04 Jul 1997, 11:26

In-Reply-To: <199707030407.VAA19754 at lists1.best.com>

Peter Cash/Rock wrote:

David Langford wrote:

...Like I suspect many readers, my reaction
when we learn that Whorl has arrived at what appears to the
same double-planet system as featured in The Fifth Head of Cerberus
was one of surprise (I think "bloody hell" was the phrase!)

Actually it was Alastair Reynolds who wrote the quoted lines. My own feeling was that it's just a bit of Wolfe playfulness, a sort of narrative pun (think of the thematic echoes running through the Wolfe Archipelago stories). For one thing, the shapeshifters in Fifth Head appear to be much better at seeming fully human than the inhumani!

You might be amused by this snippet which I just ran in the July issue of Ansible -- though maybe it's well known here:

GENE WOLFE, some say, does not hold US critic Gregory Feeley in high regard as a reviewer. But it must be sheer coincidence that Wolfe's Exodus from the Long Sun (constrained by a naming system which calls males after animals or animal parts) makes a point of dragging in a reference to a proverbially carping, fault-finding critic named Feeler....

(References: cast list and Chapter 6 of Exodus.) Just to make it perfect, carp do of course have these little barbels or feelers on their jaws.

For fairness I should add that Greg Feeley's reviews of my own stuff have been very kind....

Dave

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