

More "Kevin Malone"

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 04 Mar 1999

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Roy C. Lackey — 04 Mar 1999, 02:54

Tony Ellis wrote:

Kevin Malone is possessed by the elder Mr Malone. (Do we know his first name? Can't remember, but if not then I suspect it may well have been Kevin.) That monomaniacal desire to own the big house, to get back to his lost childhood, isn't his, it's Malone-the-servant's. That's why he could never be happy as master of the house: in the home he "remembers", he slept in the servant's annexe.

The above does not address when/how KM came to be possessed by the elder Malone. While he was still an innocent (so far as The Pines is concerned) orphan, who had had no prior connection to the estate? The "spirit", or whatever, of the elder Malone, operating at some remove from the estate, attaches itself to a random, orphaned boy, implants false memories of and causes to pine for, a home the child had never known? Causes the boy to grow up and amass a fortune just so he can buy the estate (how long did that take, 20 years, 30 years?)?

Or did a rich man, who need not have been an orphan, just happen to buy the estate and only then become possessed? If so, why then give him false memories, either of growing up on the estate and then leaving for the orphanage or not growing up on the estate but still going to an orphanage?

KM can not have the elder Malone's memories of growing up on the estate because the estate didn't exist when the elder Malone was a boy! We are told The Pines was one of the estates designed "During the teens and twenties..." (p-38). The current KM is middle-aged (what, 50?). The "now" of the story is probably the mid-to-late 1970s, because NASA is mentioned. KM would have to have been born circa the mid-to-late 1920s, the murder/suicide circa the late 1930s, in order for him to go to the orphanage at age 12. Betty Malone is stated to have been 20 years younger than the elder Malone (p-48). Even if Betty was relatively young when she was killed - say 20 -, that would make the elder Malone 40. He would have to have been born at about the turn of the century. Ergo, it was not possible for him to have been raised at The Pines.

The dates and ages I have given are necessarily approximations, but they can't be far enough off for KM to have the elder Malone's memories of growing up on the estate. My theory is looking better all the time! <g>

Roy

Tony Ellis — 04 Mar 1999, 18:07 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Roy wrote:

The above does not address when/how KM came to be possessed by the elder Malone.

Absolutely. We don't -know- how or when this happened. The story doesn't tell us. Like the question "how many children had Lady Macbeth?", it's not important.

KM can not have the elder Malone's memories of growing up on the estate because the estate didn't exist when the elder Malone was a boy!

Once again: since the story doesn't tell us one way or the other whether the elder Malone grew up on the estate, it can't matter. We're not supposed to know precisely what memories KM has or believes he has. All we need to know is that he thinks he's the son of Betty and the elder Malone, and that there never was a son.

My theory is looking better all the time! <g>

Well, as SBear points out, your theory requires the writing-in of extra Malones and events that just aren't in the original story. For me that's enough to reject it out of hand. And perhaps more importantly, this is a

-ghost- story - originally commissioned by Ramsey Campbell for his anthology New Terrors....

No offense, but your explanation turns a fine, insidiously creepy story into something pretty flat.<g>