

PEACE: 1920 timeline, last time

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 08 Nov 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/2449>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

Michael Andre-Driussi — 08 Nov 2000, 09:08

One last neat thing about the timeline that sets Den's birth-year at 1920 (and thus validates the "Liberty" magazine in Dr. B's office): it makes the Year of the Egg take place in 1929, riding exhilaratingly close to the market crash.

I like this, because it makes the "high stakes" and lunacy of the whole Egg Mania (and the lifestyles of all those we see) rather like a micro-view of the entire country on the very verge of economic collapse and Great Depression. It also lends a great deal of urgent energy to Ricepie's hand-wringing about the bank, and Blaine's hamfisting about the same.

These trace-but-delightful details are lost if the Year of the Egg is 1925.

Well, five years of difference, what does it matter? Can't we keep 1920 and have everything else work out along the EZ timeline? (Aside from 1938 being a few years younger for Den, that is.)

The answer is no.

AGE--Event

4 sees Dr. Black; "Liberty" magazine

5 THE BLACK YEAR

6 GRANDFATHER CHRISTMAS

9 THE YEAR OF THE EGG

10 Olivia marries Julius Smart (should be "THE CHEMICAL WEDDING"?) 13 Den's parents return from Europe 17? Den tells Margaret tale of Tilly 20 College junior; buys first car; Olivia dies? 22 employed at factory as engineer 24 cold house prank 25 Chinese Garden dream (Olivia dies? Peacock dies?) ~40 poor man; FURTHER DECLINE; GOLD HUNT ~50 rich man; GOLDEN YEAR ~60 dead man <g> 360 author <G>

The answer is "no" because we want "GOLD HUNT = 1954; Den = 40"; this requires Den's birth year be moved back to 1914.

Adam, you wrote about Den's career and his sense of chance. Right, there's that; but there's also the stuff he is ignoring, like the cold house prank. He is responsible (although the "whys" get more tricky, imho, if he is a 24 year old engineer rather than an 18 year old summer worker), he should be fired, but he's Julius's nephew, so he isn't fired; he should advance through his years at the plant, but there's that black mark, so he doesn't advance; he is frozen (just like the fellow who died).

The prank was more than a stupid mistake. It was murderous, and Den had plenty of time to fix it (i.e., unlock door, run like hell), but he didn't.

More about the prank: a prank among equals is one thing, a prank from an engineer to a laborer

seems more abusive to me. I can see how an engineer would spend some time in the cold house, doing one thing or another; how he might become acquainted with workers there, with friendship growing to the point where pranks can happen. Maybe I'm imagining too much distance between entry-level engineer and cold house worker in a new-ish factory in the late '30s.

Was the victim just an unknown, or was he somehow somebody that Den wanted revenge upon? Even in the sense that Den pushed Bobby to protect Joe.

Why the prank, anyway? Emotional tangle around that age: Olivia died; Den didn't marry Margaret . . .

(The Chinese Garden dream is clearly founded upon Olivia's death, and metaphorically speaking, it takes place inside her head--that is, Den is walking in there. He says he is 25 years old, which makes it seem as though Olivia dies when Den is 25. Then again, it is more about Den coming to terms with her death, completing the process of mourning . . . so maybe the Chinese Garden dream has to do with the death of Peacock, killer of Olivia: this allows Den to finally accept Olivia's death, find peace with it . . . or maybe it was just five years of less dramatic mourning that finally did it . . .)

=mantis=