

PEACE: Maggie & prank

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 09 Nov 2000

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 09 Nov 2000, 14:15

Roy wrote:

But being, like most men, at heart a hopeless romantic, that answer, too, leaves me dissatisfied, which brings me to where I didn't really want to go, back to the coldhouse. If Den was the irresponsible party who let that 18 year old kid die--and, like it or not, I don't see the point of including that segment if he wasn't--then, unlike the case of Bobby Black, he was morally culpable. He was too old to excuse his behavior. The company may have tried to cover it up, and was successful enough to quash criminal charges and perhaps a concomitant civil suit (or maybe they paid off the kid's family; who knows?), but too many people knew about it to keep it a secret, especially since the plant was probably, even then, the town's largest employer. Again, one way or another, Margaret would have known about it. That's not the kind of man a woman wants to marry or to father her children.

I can go along with this very easily . . . =if= Den were 18 at the time of the accident!

The problem is: the courtship started in high school; something pivotal happened at the picnic; the picnic happened in the "age of the bicycle" which we =know= happened before Den got his car (junior year in college).

We can try to fix it a bit. Say that the pivotal event was Den proposed marriage, and Margaret gave a conditional yes (he gets college degree, makes x amount of money, whatever shade of practicality/gold digging you need). Then, (4? 6?) however many years later (years she is waiting, mind you), Den pulls the prank and Maggie chucks him for it.

Well, maybe, but it seems forced. Den would have a clear goal in mind, at least during those college years, and it doesn't seem evident.

Meanwhile, I've been mulling over the 1954 cluster, and I've realized again that for me this date is highly inelastic: the further it creeps away from 1954, the less palatable the whole thing is.

Here's a segment from Roy's EZ Timeline:

1928 L. Gold leaves Breslau. (p.197)

1929 circa, L. Gold meets Sally. (p.214) [1]

1929 October, Stock Market crash, begin Depression.

1929-1934 circa, Olivia dies. [1]

1933 End Prohibition.

1938(summer) Coldhouse prank , Den age 24. (p.230)

1939-1945 W.W.II.

1950-1953 Korean War.

1954-1959 Time frame for the Lois/Gold affair. Den age 40-45. Sherry Gold is 16. Lois is close to 35.

1963 circa, Den becomes president of the company at about 49. Crazy Pete on island.

1974-1975 Den's death; PEACE published.

[1] There is a problem here. Two events are linked in that they both occurred 25 years before the time of the Lois/Gold affair--Vi's death and Gold meeting Sally--yet other factors seem to separate these two events by several years.

As background reminder: we (Roy and I) spent a lot of time trying to separate the siamese twins "1963: Crazy Pete on Island/new President Den" from "Sherry is 16/Gold Hunt" clusters. We did that, but an unfortunate side effect was that "Sherry is 16/Gold Hunt" became unanchored in time.

Because of that blasted "bobbysoxer" line, we want it to be in 1954, the earliest it could be according to other things in the text (OED says it first appeared in the '40s).

1954 works well for the Gold Thread, too. And for the Philips farm.

But it plays complete hell with Olivia's death, since "25 years ago" would mean that Den was 14 or 15--far too early (where we usually take either the ages of 20 or 25)!

(25 from the Chinese Garden dream; 20 is probably from the same tangle that suggests Den is 45 at GOLD HUNT, and 45 minus 25 equals 20.)

And as I say, I find myself feeling fatigue if the Gold Hunt date moves much beyond 1956 . . . as it crawls back toward "1963: Crazy Pete on Island/new President Den," I begin to think, well, what was the point in separating them at all? <g>

What a devil, that 5 year imp! You try squishing it out in the birth year, and it just reappears later on in the timeline . . .

Try fiddling with 1920:

1920 -- Den born

1924 -- "Liberty" magazine (yay!)

1929 -- YEAR OF THE EGG HUNT (yay!)

1938 -- COLD HOUSE PRANK (Den 18; yay!)

1958 -- GOLD HUNT: Den 38 (At age 9 Den saw Phillips farm being built; tells Lois it was about 30 years ago, maybe more) [3] 1963 -- Crazy Pete/new President Den (Den's age 43) [4]

[3] = age 38 minus 25 years . . . so Olivia died when Den was 13? Not likely, yet that's not much different from the numbers already being generated in EZ.

[4] = well, this seems to violate the "poor man at 40, rich man at 50" line, unless one is willing to look at the phrase literally and see that he might have become "rich" as early as age 41!

MORE ABOUT SHERRY:

Hey, she's wearing some boy's class ring! Did she get married to him? If she is pregnant, it seems like she was putting on the weight before her tryst with Den, another pointer towards quick marriage or eek, something "back alley" from the town's alchemist?

=mantis=