

PEACE: "facts"

The Urth list — 4 messages, 2 voices, 10 Nov 2000

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Roy C. Lackey — 10 Nov 2000, 01:24

For background about what mantis and I have been struggling with, and for those who may be interested, and/or want to make a stab at establishing their own timeline for PEACE, here is a collection of "facts" from the text which must be incorporated. Page numbers are for the Berkley paperback.

YEH is mantis's shorthand for Year of the Egg Hunt; Golden Year refers to the year of the Gold Hunt with Lois, and of Den's dealings with the Gold family.

Solid facts regarding dates and ages:

Den was 5 when deerskin painted and Bobby Black injured. (4,72)

Bobby Black died 4 years after injury, in YEH, and Den's parents went to Europe about June; Den went to live with Olivia. (72,39)

Den was 9 in YEH. (72)

Den was president by age 50, but was not at 40. (201)

Sherry was 16 in Golden Year. (202)

WWI was over before YEH (Jan's brother in Tilly tale). (143)

Den saw toy soldiers at Macafee's store dating to WWI in YEH. (67)

Den was 60+ at time of Dan French/reporter tour. (233)

1928 Gold leaves Breslau. (197)

1938 coldhouse prank. (230)

1963-64 circa, Crazy Pete on island. (Based on "The Changeling")

Less solid facts:

I have established (at least to my satisfaction) from various clues that Den could not have been born before 1910 (toy soldiers in YEH), or later than 1920 (Depression in future of YEH).

Den made his astral visit (AV) to Dr. Black to a time when he was 4. There he saw a "Liberty"

magazine, which began publishing in 1920. (153)

Den was two years out of college in 1938. (233)

Den could not have met Lois and the Golds before 1953 (1928 + Louis met Sally 25 years before Golden Year). (214)

Deerskin painted "about" 40 years before Golden Year. (164)

Olivia died 25 years before Golden Year. (158)

Den owned Macafee's store "about" 40 years after YEH. (56)

Den, while president, started to tell Tilly tale to Bill Batton "thirty-five or forty years" after YEH. (135)

Den, age 9-11, searched for arrowheads with Vi and Peacock "30 years or a bit more" before Golden Year. (190)

Dan French presented Den a gift for Den's 50th birthday. (79)

Mrs. Helen Birkhead Tyler died the same day as the Dan French/reporter tour. (243)

Fuzzy facts:

Den was "twenty-five or so" in his Chinese Garden dream. (65)

At time of astral visit (AV) to Dr. Van Ness: Crazy Pete was on island (46); Den had been president for less than a year (stopped carrying knife "months ago" (12); Den had a large garden (15) (implying a large house, which implies that the house he is living in at time of AV could not be the museum-roomed house [and which Wolfe is reported to have denied existed in the first place] he was reviewing the plans for, while he was still living in his old apartment yet obviously was then president (35-36), because such a house could not have been built in the time available).

Bill Batton, Charlie Turner, and Eleanor Bold Porter visits all happened on the same day (193) (which means that Den could be no more than 49, per Batton above).

Den would have to be 40-45 years old at time of AV to Dr. V, based on the doctor's judgements (14), which conflicts with several of the above "facts" (Den too young to be president at that age). This suggests that more than one AV to Dr. V is being conflated.

Roy

Adam Stephanides — 12 Nov 2000, 23:48 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

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Thanks for posting this, Roy! I like references <g>. I also think it's a good thing, with so many conjectures floating around, to state the evidence (or lack of evidence) upon which they rest, as explicitly as possible.

--Adam

Adam Stephanides — 17 Nov 2000, 17:45 · follows Adam Stephanides

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

At time of astral visit (AV) to Dr. Van Ness:

[snip]

Den had been president for less than a year (stopped carrying knife "months ago" (12)

I don't think this is correct. On p. 12 (Harper & Row) Weer says: "I begin to go through my pants pockets looking for the knife; it is not there, and I remember that I have stopped carrying it months ago because I went to the office every day and, because I no longer worked in the lab, never used it; and that it wore the fabric of my trousers where its hard bolsters pressed at the corners of my right hip pocket, so that they wore out first there." But on p. 17 Weer refers to "those hard bolsters which, when my life was over and I had come to my desk, wore out so many gabardines and serges". Together, these imply that while Weer stopped carrying the knife less than a year before the AV, Weer did not stop carrying the knife as soon as he became president, but continued to carry it long enough for it to wear out "so many" suits (I would imagine this would be at least a year).

But there's another possibility as well. Immediately the first quote, Weer goes on: "I stand, holding on to the mantel with one hand, and look again: it is not there. The rain patters down outside." Here, Weer seems to be back in his "museum house." This raises the possibility that the first search for the knife took place in museum house as well, and not in Van Ness's office, in which case "months ago" would refer to Weer's present (or what he imagines his "present" to be) and not to the time of the AV. I think the first reading I gave is more natural, though, at least in isolation (how either would fit in with the rest of the timeline I don't know).

--Adam

Roy C. Lackey — 18 Nov 2000, 03:06 · follows Adam Stephanides

Adam quoted and wrote:

At time of astral visit (AV) to Dr. Van Ness:[snip]

Den had been president for less than a year (stopped carrying knife "months ago" (12)

<<I don't think this is correct. On p. 12 (Harper & Row) Weer says: "I begin to go through my pants pockets looking for the knife; it is not there, and I remember that I have stopped carrying it months ago because I went to the office every day and, because I no longer worked in the lab, never used it; and that it wore the fabric of my trousers where its hard bolsters pressed at the corners of my right hip pocket, so that they wore out first there." But on p. 17 Weer refers to "those hard bolsters which, when my life was over and I had come to my desk, wore out so many gabardines and serges". Together, these imply that while Weer stopped carrying the knife less than a year before the AV, Weer did not stop carrying the knife as soon as he became president, but continued to carry it long enough for it to wear out "so many" suits (I would imagine this would be at least a year).>>

You may be right. OTOH, it depends. <g> We know that Weer carried the knife for many years; he showed it to Lois during the Gold Hunt year (164). So, he knew the effects of carrying it on his pants pockets long before he became president. It's unclear what type of clothing he wore as an engineer, but I infer that he wore suits then as well, because he mentions putting on his coat (159), and the weather was not cold. He also worked at a desk then, in an office (159). I concluded from the passages you quoted that he continued to carry the knife while an engineer, despite the adverse effects on his pockets, because he occasionally had use for it; once he became president he no longer had a use for it, so he stopped carrying it.

Of course, this puts an entirely different spin on the usual interpretation of the often cited "when my life was over and I came to my desk" quote. Most people assume that to refer to when he gave up his 'useful' job as a middle-aged "unimportant employee" (148) and became president. In light of mantis's "ben Yahya and the Marid" link to the coldhouse prank, tying young Weer to decades of selfless service in a dead-end job, it's possible that when he bound himself to Smart was the occasion when his "life was over". That is "what went wrong" with the plans he had for his life, plans made before he was twenty (201). He wasn't going to go anywhere with that job, and didn't, until Smart's death released him.

Roy