

Castlevew Haloo

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 05 Jan 2001

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/2531>

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 05 Jan 2001, 12:47

Speccahtickled Bear done wrote:

At 10:55 2001-01-04 -0800, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote:

Okay... Having now reread CASTLEVIEW under somewhat better circumstances (i.e., at home, not lacking massive quantities of sleep, etc.), I'm still puzzled by the puzzlement.

...

So what's the problem here?

Does that mean you can answer all, many, or even some of the long list of questions I posted a few weeks ago?

The short answer is "no." Unfortunately, you left out my very important caveat.

I wrote:

The only major puzzles I think left by the book's ending are whether certain characters are mortal or fay.

I suspect that if we could decide clearly who was and who was not Fay, the rest would fall into place -- at least, as much as you can expect things to do with Faerie to fall into place.

Many of your questions either fall into that category or would most likely be answered as a side effect of answering one or more questions in the category. I guess I'm just comfortable with the uncertainties the book leaves -- I don't see them as puzzles so much as a direct result of the slippery nature of Faerie.

The answer to the big question ("what's going on here?") seems to be: "Two factions of faerie-folk are fighting over something. At least a part of the subject of the fight is Morgan's wish to bring her brother (who is [in some sense] Shields) back to dwell in her castle." (Morgan's brother is, traditionally, Arthur; nobody ever seems to notice that if Morgan is fay, Arthur ought to be also.)

One can ask the subsidiary question as to which faction a given faerie belongs to, but the question disintegrates: faeries are, by nature (or at least by tradition), treacherous; I suspect that they change sides much as they change clothes, and perhaps more often.

Given all that, I'll attack at least some of those questions...

Is Shields really killed?

Flip answer -- "Yes, but he got better."

Serious answer: Define "killed" so as to give the question meaning. In particular, define it as it pertains to a native of Faerie -- which Shields, in some sense, is. For that matter, define the word "really" (or "real") in that context...

But what about the rest of the details? Who is Liam Fee,
and why does he want to buy the house?

I have no trouble saying, "Yeah, _he's_ fay." The questions then become: "Which side is Liam Fee on when he wants to buy the house? And why does he want to?"

I suspect that he doesn't actually want to buy the house -- I think that's a sort of reverse-Maguffin, something which has no real importance at all, but which a character (Liam Fee) uses to prod others into behaving the way he wants.

Is he really an alien or monster, as he appears to be when
Hwan Lee stuns him?

I think this is another question that needs to be taken into a different context -- again, the word "really" is perhaps not meaningful here. I mean: where do you get the idea that a faerie _has_ a single, "real" form? We do not see the fair folk; we see what they want us to see.

I don't know whether he's _an_ alien or _a_ monster, but he's certainly alien and monstrous.

Are Jose Balanco and Hwan (which sounds a lot like "Juan")
Lee the equivalent of Balin and Balan? There's the names
and the killing of a brother.

I would say that, yes, there is a definite and deliberate resonance there. (Which raises the most interesting question of who reflects the Fisher-king role in this particular resonance-pattern ...)

Who is Lucie? Why is she pretending to be French, or if
she really is French, why does she sound American for a
while to Sally?

Another faerie, I'm pretty sure. I'm not clear at this point which side she's on at any given moment.

Do we agree that she appears and disappears a lot, and doesn't
show up in mirrors?

Yes.

She's afraid of water too, like a cat, and her name, Carabas,
is from Puss in Boots. I can't buy Robert Borski's theory
that she is the same as G. Gordon Kitty, though!

I'm inclined to agree - though come to think of it, I don't recall that we ever see them together
8*)

G. Gordon Kitty is great fun, and one of the most
explicable figures. I take him to be just what he seems,
Judy's cat transformed by the magic of the fairy realm.

This is hardly a "just what he seems" kind of answer! I came away with the idea that this is as much his "real" form as the one he shows at home: nothing certain, but suggestive enough to entertain the idea that he's a Faerie-cat that Judy has (unknowingly[? but who knows what, in her so-imaginative heart, Judy really knows?]) taken in.

What's all the business with the organ playing in the museum?

Cool effects?

Sorry, flip again. Try it this way:, who took (blanking on his name) from the museum and why, and why'd they let him go -- especially out near-or-at the camp?

Is he fay? (And on which side?) I'm not sure. But clearly at least some of the characters who want us (or who want the residents of the town, or whom Wolfe wants us) to think they're

mortal aren't, and he's not a bad candidate.

There are hints in it of trolls, which tells us who took the diary, but why? Why play the music?

This is a "damifino" question. I forgot about it completely.

Viviane Morgan appears to be Vivian *and* Morgan le Fay.
How does she manage to be both?

-- and the Lady of the Lake, who is not _always_ the same person as Viviane. I gather that "identity" is not the same thing to faeries as it is to us -- you may be me tomorrow?

Does Sally really take up with von Madadh at the end?

It kind of looks that way. I wouldn't want to stake money on it, though; the story ends with no real sense of what is going to happen afterwards.

How does Mercedes feel about that, if he killed her father?

Did he? Are you sure? More important: Is Mercedes sure? Do we see Mercedes seeing what Mercedes sees? What does she see and when?

Von Madadh is King of Hounds or Wolves, and he's the dog that Sally thinks is Remy. But what's he doing? Is he just there to lure everyone to the Castle?

I suspect he's someone who's on neither side. I'm pretty darned sure that he has to do with the Wild Hunt. (H'mmm. Does the horned king show up again after Von Madadh appears... Is Von Madadh... Ah, never mind...)

Is all the trouble at Meadow Grass to do with the attempts to kill Wrangler? It all seems rather indirect if so. If not, what is it about?

Lucie, at least. And Shields, once he shows up there.

What is Sally doing in the wagon with the wild horsemen?

See above re: Von Madadh.

--Dan'l

Peter Westlake — 11 Jan 2001, 18:07 · follows Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

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The short answer is "no." Unfortunately, you left out my very important caveat.

I wrote:

The only major puzzles I think left by the book's ending are whether certain characters are mortal or fay.

Indeed, I didn't realize how many of the questions you were going to be able to relate to this.

I suspect that if we could decide clearly who was and who was not Fay, the rest would fall into place -- at least, as much as you can expect things to do with Faerie to fall into place.

Many of your questions either fall into that category or would most likely be answered as a side effect of answering one or more questions in the category. I guess I'm just comfortable with the uncertainties the book leaves -- I don't see them as puzzles so much as a direct result of the slippery nature of Faerie.

The answer to the big question ("what's going on here?") seems to be: "Two factions of faerie-folk are fighting over something. At least a part of the subject of the fight is Morgan's wish to bring her brother (who is [in some sense] Shields) back to dwell in her castle." (Morgan's brother is, traditionally, Arthur; nobody ever seems to notice that if Morgan is fay, Arthur ought to be also.)

I see what you mean - but is she his full sister, or just half? Might she be half faerie and half human?

One can ask the subsidiary question as to which faction a given faerie belongs to, but the question disintegrates: faeries are, by nature (or at least by tradition), treacherous; I suspect that they change sides much as they change clothes, and perhaps more often.

Given all that, I'll attack at least some of those questions...

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I have no trouble saying, "Yeah, _he's_ fay." The questions then become: "Which side is Liam Fee on when he wants to buy the house? And why does he want to?"

I suspect that he doesn't actually want to buy the house -- I think that's a sort of reverse-Maguffin, something which has no real importance at all, but which a character (Liam Fee) uses to prod others into behaving the way he wants.

Now there's a notion. I'm trying to think of particular instances, but I suspect I would have to read the book again.

Hmm - arguing against that is the fact that he kills Tom because he decides not to sell. The Roberts family seem to have close connections with the Castle, and the house itself has a tower like a castle. I wonder how long it has been there ...

Is he really an alien or monster, as he appears to be when Hwan Lee stuns him?

I think this is another question that needs to be taken into a different context -- again, the word "really" is perhaps not meaningful here. I mean: where do you get the idea that a faerie _has_ a single, "real" form? We do not see the fair folk; we see what they want us to see.

That's just it; Fee is off his guard, stunned.

I don't know whether he's _an_ alien or _a_ monster, but he's certainly alien and monstrous.

Agreed, and I'm sure Tony is right in suggesting that aliens and fairies are the same thing. [As an aside, I think this is literally true in the real world, too - they even *look* like elves. Actual extraterrestrial life forms excluded, of course.]

Are Jose Balanco and Hwan (which sounds a lot like "Juan") Lee the equivalent of Balin and Balan? There's the names and the killing of a brother.

I would say that, yes, there is a definite and deliberate resonance there. (Which raises the most interesting question of who reflects the Fisher-king role in this particular resonance-pattern ...)

Who is Lucie? Why is she pretending to be French, or if she really is French, why does she sound American for a while to Sally?

Another faerie, I'm pretty sure. I'm not clear at this point which side she's on at any given moment.

I agree that faeries are notoriously unreliable, but I don't think we need to assume they change sides in the story unless there's some textual evidence for it. Of course, I haven't been looking for it. Anyway, she's pretty clearly one of Fee's lot. He appears genuinely upset at her death. I don't think he's making that up, because no-one knows there is any connection between them.

Do we agree that she appears and disappears a lot, and doesn't show up in mirrors?

Yes.

She's afraid of water too, like a cat, and her name, Carabas, is from Puss in Boots. I can't buy Robert Borski's theory that she is the same as G. Gordon Kitty, though!

I'm inclined to agree - though come to think of it, I don't recall that we ever see them together 8*)

G. Gordon Kitty is great fun, and one of the most explicable figures. I take him to be just what he seems, Judy's cat transformed by the magic of the fairy realm.

This is hardly a "just what he seems" kind of answer!

:-)

I came away with the idea that this is as much his "real" form as the one he shows at home:

Yes. He has history, too, in the form of family heirlooms.

nothing certain, but suggestive enough to entertain the idea that he's a Faerie-cat that Judy has (unknowingly[? but who knows what, in her so-imaginative heart, Judy really knows?]) taken in.

Personally, I think all cats are like that. To suggest that GGL is somehow Special is to imply that other cats are Ordinary, and that hardly seems likely.

What's all the business with the organ playing in the museum?

Cool effects?

Sorry, flip again. Try it this way:, who took (blanking on his name) from the museum and why, and why'd they let him go -- especially out near-or-at the camp?

Bob Roberts. Er - yes, who? The troll turns up in both places. And there's the strange boy, too.

Is he fay? (And on which side?) I'm not sure. But clearly at least some of the characters who want us (or who want the residents of the town, or whom Wolfe wants us) to think they're mortal aren't, and he's not a bad candidate.

But then Sally and Seth would be fay too.

There are hints in it of trolls, which tells us who took the diary, but why? Why play the music?

This is a "damifino" question. I forgot about it completely.

It always sticks in my head because it happens quite early on, before we have **any** idea of what's happening, and because it is so dramatic and inexplicable.

Viviane Morgan appears to be Vivian **and** Morgan le Fay. How does she manage to be both?

-- and the Lady of the Lake, who is not *_always_* the same person as Viviane. I gather that "identity" is not the same thing to faeries as it is to us -- you may be me tomorrow?

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Does Sally really take up with von Madadh at the end?

It kind of looks that way. I wouldn't want to stake money on it, though; the story ends with no real sense of what is going to happen afterwards.

How does Mercedes feel about that, if he killed her father?

Did he? Are you sure? More important: Is Mercedes sure? Do we see Mercedes seeing what Mercedes sees? What does she see and when?

She certainly seems to believe it when they are all going home in the car. We don't see it directly, that's true, but isn't it a wolf-like creature that goes for him?

Von Madadh is King of Hounds or Wolves, and he's the dog that Sally thinks is Remy. But what's he doing? Is he just there to lure everyone to the Castle?

I suspect he's someone who's on neither side. I'm pretty darned sure that he has to do with the Wild Hunt. (H'mmm. Does the horned king show up again after Von Madadh appears... Is Von Madadh... Ah, never mind...)

Rex von Madadh - King of Hounds. Of course. Dozy old Bear.

Is all the trouble at Meadow Grass to do with the attempts to kill Wrangler? It all seems rather indirect if so. If not, what is it about?

Lucie, at least. And Shields, once he shows up there.

Vivian was trying to get Wrangler (as a descendant of Arthur), so if she had succeeded he would have showed up in her castle as Shields did. Lucie was trying to kill him too, but maybe that would have been different. Perhaps he would have become a vampire (or whatever) like her. But why not just knock him over the head or push him under a horse?

What is Sally doing in the wagon with the wild horsemen?

See above re: Von Madadh.

I'll bear that in mind next time I read it - you're right, I'm sure, but I can't put the pieces together from memory. Thanks.

[*] Re being you - no, no. Completely impossible. Couldn't happen.

SBear.

Houston, Houston, do you read? I'd mortgage half my soul
If I could hear it once again, Apollo, ground control
The devil take the men who killed the dream that died too soon
For all my dreams are haunted by a fire on the Moon.
- Visual Purple.