

CASTLEVIEW Halloo!

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 15 Jan 2001

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 15 Jan 2001, 09:07

SpecBear wrote:

(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 think this is what our deconstructionist friends would call the hinge. Tug on this in just the right way and the whole novel falls apart/falls into place. Actually, a hinge is maybe not a bad term for dealing with this novel, but we're talking about the hinge at the center of a spiral labyrinth instead of the hinge of a portal (but the spiral labyrinth is a portal). Is the whole novel structured as a spiral (maybe a spiral dance?), come to think of it? Another day, another reading, and I'm in the middle of so much else right now...

* which is two ways of saying "the same" thing, except of course you can never say the same thing twice or maybe even once ... and now you know why I have limited tolerance for the deconstructionist PoV even while finding a few of their tools/terms useful...

(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?

Hoomp. Well. She's his half-sister, by their mother -- Ygraine, if I recall the name correctly, who'd had somewhere between one and three sisters by her first husband (the other one of real significance to the story being Morgawse, wife of Lot, mother of Gawain, Gareth, a couple of others, and, by her half-brother, Mordred.

All this is pretty interesting, and a good overview of Arthurian stuff is important well beyond CASTLEVIEW -- someone else pointed out that the "Sun" books seem to be full of young men of mysterious parentage who rise through a series of adventures (and a mystical sword given as a gift) to a rulership which turns out to be theirs by (divine?) right and plan.

I suspect that [Fee] 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 ...

Now, as someone remarked, there's a notion, and one which I'll bring back to haunt you in a little while.

I guess my main reason for suspecting it of Maguffinosity is that there is simply nothing in the novel that gives any kind of plausible reason for him to want it, except his own story as given to the real estate lady, and that is palpably lame.

[...]

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 ...)

Nobody taking this bait? Darn, I'd really like to get some speculations on this. (I haven't a clue myself.)

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,

Actually, I think the word is "feckless"...

..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.

Good take, I think.

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.

But if "The Roberts family seem to have close connections with the Castle," then a Faerie-cat seems quite plausible.

(Btw -- is "GGL" a typo or an [expletive deleted] Freudian slip? 8*)

Is [Bob Roberts] 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.

And why are attempts made on Seth's life, eh?

I suspect the Robertseses of being part-fay without knowing it. ("There's a bit of green in your family tree, Mrs. Roberts.")

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.

I have a feeling that this depends on how and possibly where he (either Shields or Wrangler) is killed or "killed." Being killed in mortal combat on the borderlands of Faerie is one thing; being killed from ambush in a spot on this side of (though quite close to) the gate is another.

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.

You have no idea what a weird experience it was to come across this, fifteen years after writing it. Thank you.