

sepia man as Tilly?

The Urth list — 7 messages, 5 voices, 09 Aug 2002

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 09 Aug 2002, 19:27

Here is something I wanted to mention before.

The photo of the giant and the man: as an advertisement (goes well with the photo of Candy as an advertisement; perhaps fits well with the "commerce documentary" of section 5 of PEACE) it makes sense that the "normal" man beside the giant actually be rather small, yet still in normal proportions, to visually over-state the actual height of the giant.

And since we know Smart was small-ish, this is another nice point in favor of the normal sepia man as Julius Smart.

OTOH, why wouldn't he be recognized? Robert Borski has pointed out the social decorum involved whereby the secretary might avoid mentioning it, and Weer being opaque as usual takes care of his side.

But what if the normal sepia man really is a man that neither one has ever seen--what if he is Tilly?

Again, if Charlie is acting as the ghost of the past, then he is showing us something about a previous owner/manager (I forget, but doesn't the ghost show Scroog the wonderful Christmas parties put on by Marley?). Well, that would work for both Smart and Tilly. Yet the arrival of Charlie initially validates the story told by Smart about Tilly, nearly like a character stepping out of a book; and Tilly is the invisible one (I mean, we even question whether he exists or is just a mask for Smart!) whereas Weer saw the courtship, the wedding, and even lived in the house with Smart.

So what does it do, having the sepia man as Tilly? It might point to another offspring, another heir to the factory, if Doris is Tilly's daughter. Because Tilly's condition of being "stoned" <g> links to "Mason," and Tilly had close ties to the carnies, and so on.

Roy, remind me about the Tilly subsection of the timeline. Tilly died in 1922 or so? Wife "died" when?

Is 1920 a good benchmark for natural sepia, for the clothing, for the Lombard reference?

Eek! Since what I'm saying here is that Doris's story somehow "fills in the blanks" to Smart's story of Tilly, then what are the blanks: the wife, the son, etc. What if somehow lovely Candy is the one who ends up in the aquarium tank?

Just a creepy thought.

Anyway, back to the photos. Adam Stephanides (iirc) wondered why Charlie would not mention the second photo. Weeeeelll . . . if it =was= a blackmail thing (which would fit with my sense of

Charlie running some kind of scam), and the photo shows Weer and the giant (or any other kind of blackmail evidence), then Charlie doesn't need to say anything -- in fact he =shouldn't= say anything. The artifact speaks for itself, or the attempt is off-target (Weer is unaffected) and Charlie cannot be implicated in a blackmail attempt (since he makes no mention).

=mantis=

Robert Borski — 09 Aug 2002, 21:37 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

mantis having speculated:

"But what if the normal sepia man really is a man that neither one has ever seen--what if he is Tilly?"

I rather like this idea, and I believe StoneOx alluded to it earlier, though not with the same amplification you provided.

It explains why Miss Hadow does not recognize the two men, as well as Den's admission that he's never met them. Also the antiquated fashion sense of the giant.

The three relatives of Tilly's who want Smart to take over the pharmacy may be Mrs. Mason, Candy, and Arline (though the latter two must be very young), and the giant in the photo is not Tom Lavine but "little" Rodney (the bed may be a childhood keepsake or else he simply grew out of it fast). Tilly probably never married "Mrs. Mason" so therefore her two children are illegitimate. (This would explain why the carnies don't believe there's a real Mr. Mason.) But as for Tilly being the father of Doris by yet another relationship/marriage, I find this less credible. According to the timeline, Tilly dies somewhere around 1924, which would make Doris about 39 when Charlie Turner shows up. It also makes the ages of Candy and Arline--if they're Tilly's daughters--probably even older--another glitch in the theory.

And still to be answered is why Charlie Turner sends a 40 year old photo of Tilly and giant to D. Weer, as well as why the photo of Candy looks similarly aged.

But overall I think the sepia man = Tilly answers more questions than it raises.

Robert Borski

Michael Andre-Driussi — 09 Aug 2002, 22:24 · follows Robert Borski

Robert Borski wrote:

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Yes, this was my other creepy thought: that the three relatives of Tilly might be hereby revealed.

I had not quite made the Rodney-as-giant connection, but that is possible, too, in which case, though, Doris is not "of Tilly" but a prospective bride of Tilly's heir (not "hair," if Charlie is really Rodney, which I've often wondered), and we might expect the focus of the story to have been on the giant rather than on Doris.

Tilly

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illegitimate. (This would explain why the carnies don't believe there's a real Mr. Mason.) But as for Tilly being the father of Doris by yet another relationship/marriage, I find this less credible. According to the timeline, Tilly dies somewhere around 1924, which would make Doris about 39 when Charlie Turner shows up. It also makes the ages of Candy and Arline--if they're Tilly's daughters--probably even older--another glitch in the theory.

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Both of these timeline paradoxes are "solved" if Charlie is a time-traveler from the past, like the ghost of Christmas past in "A Christmas Carol." In PEACE terms, this =may= mean that Charlie Turner died and really is a ghost, and his visit of Weer is an example of a haunting from the past (as opposed to a haunting from the future), but I'm not going that far, yet, I'm just looking at Charlie as being a time-traveler who does =not= know the history of things, he has to go back to the past, live through events, and then move to the future to report what happened.

Now as to why the ghost of carnies past would visit Weer on the same day that he is visited by the spirit of factory present and the lady of future grave-trees, well that is a puzzler, unless it is exactly that pattern derived from "A Christmas Carol."

I've got to find a copy of "A Christmas Carol" if I'm going to keep going on like this. Maybe there's one online?

=mantis=

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Roy C. Lackey — 10 Aug 2002, 06:49 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

mantis asks:

Roy, remind me about the Tilly subsection of the timeline. Tilly died in 1922 or so? Wife "died" when?

Close enough. And his wife "passed on a number of years ago". (120) Probably during The Great War.

Is 1920 a good benchmark for natural sepia, for the clothing, for the Lombard reference?

Not for Lombard; as Robert has pointed out, her heyday was the 1930s.

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There's a problem with that. In "real-time" Charlie's visit/letter happened in the early 1960s. If Charlie is a time-traveling ghost of the past, then I presume he also has no knowledge of the future? In that case, how to account for his contemporary reference to television? (221)

BTW, I haven't forgotten Robert's (or your earlier) quite valid query about my take on the relevance of Doris's story to Weer or to the book--I just don't have a good answer. I even dug out a 1729 translation of "Cinderilla", taken from Perrault's collection. The parallels of Doris to Cinderella are obvious, but so are the differences. I can't decide if that is important, or if Wolfe just ignores the "facts" and recasts the story to suit his purpose, as he did with the Sidhe story.

-Roy

Roy C. Lackey — 10 Aug 2002, 07:26 · follows Roy C. Lackey

mantis wrote:

But what if the normal sepia man really is a man that neither one has ever seen--what if he is Tilly?

It just occurred to me why this can't be--probably, maybe.

"He was one of the tallest men I ever saw, I guess, but most of the time he stood like he didn't have any chest at all, all hollowed out there, so he didn't look much taller than the average." (117) Even slouched, Tilly was above average height.

-Roy

Adam Stephanides — 11 Aug 2002, 00:30 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

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But we don't know that the other man isn't above average height. All Miss Hadow says about him is that he isn't "really very tall," which still allows for him to be taller than average.

And mantis wrote:

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All Miss Hadow says is that the girl's face reminds her of Carole Lombard, not the clothes or hairstyle; so the Lombard reference doesn't help to date the photo.

--Adam

StoneOx17 — 11 Aug 2002, 13:26 · follows Adam Stephanides

Hello,

There's a simple explanation for the second man in Tom's photo. I think the photograph, like Candy's, is a publicity photograph. What do you do to make a publicity photograph of a giant?

You have to establish scale, so you take a fairly short, normal-looking, man and pose the giant next to him. However, you want to keep the focus of the photograph on the giant, so you pose them together, maybe shaking hands, so that the second man has his back to the viewer, is off-center, and is wearing less noteworthy clothing (possibly a plain suit). This explains why Miss Hadow only described the giant and why Weer said "either" and not "any" in "I've never met either of these people."

This explanation leaves several questions, one being why Tom is wearing the same clothing as Julius. I think this has to be significant and that Wolfe is establishing some link between Julius and Tom. Maybe Julius is responsible for Tom's height (people who have followed my postings will realize this is my favorite explanation), or maybe Tom's role in the Cinderella story relates to Julius in some way.

-Stone Ox