

More Musings on Peace

The Urth list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 19 Aug 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3411>

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StoneOx17 — 19 Aug 2002, 02:30

Hello,

I have a few thoughts inspired by Robert Borski's recent essay on Peace. I don't believe that Weer is the devil, but I do like the idea that uncle Julius is the devil. As Robert pointed out, he has very small feet (hooves?). He also has one shoulder noticeably higher than the other (is this another attribute of the devil?). It also fits well with my theory that Julius poisoned Mr. Tilly in order to inherit his carny practice.

So after a brief interval where he lives with the devil, Weer goes to college, graduates, comes back to work for the devil, and eventually inherits from the devil. This can't be good for his soul. I was reminded of the story of the banshee in Peace. Briefly summarized, Jack and Molly are in love, but Molly's father can't stand the thought of his daughter marrying a penniless laborer, so he insists that Jack stay in the barn haunted by the banshee for a night. Jack eventually defeats the banshee and marries Molly, but because of the banshee, Molly's father dies and Jack is never able to consummate his marriage. I think this story hints at "what went wrong" in Weer's life.

After college, the natural time for Weer to consider marrying Margaret Lorn, Weer's parents had probably already lost all their money. (At least, all of it they hadn't spent on their years touring Europe and on Olivia's wedding. Is there any doubt that they lost their money in the Depression?). Margaret's father, Carl, is a pennypincher, and easily might have insisted that Weer get a good job before he marry Margaret. So Weer goes to work at the factory, kills someone in the coldhouse prank, loses his chance for Margaret, and becomes a virtual slave to uncle Julius.

Finally, if Julius is the devil, I have to wonder if he conspired with Professor Peacock in Olivia's death. They were good friends when Peacock introduced Julius to Olivia, and there is the mysterious letter from Peacock to Julius on the President's desk which Weer is unable to read because it's nailed down. Did Julius inherit any money from her? If so, his factory was built using money that is triply blood money. He got it from Mr. Tilly's death, from Olivia's death, and from the carny practice, which carries guilt at least for Mrs. Tilly's and Rodney's deaths, as well as any ill effects on the carnies.

I've run out of speculations for now, which is probably good because they're based on less and less textual evidence, so I'll end here.

- Stone Ox

Michael Andre-Driussi — 19 Aug 2002, 02:59 · follows StoneOx17

Stone Ox wrote:

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That is interesting!

Just to be sure I comprehend, a timeline would look like this:

1934 (Weer at 20) Weer buys car as college junior

1935 (Weer at 21) Weer graduates from college; picnic with Margaret ("age of the bicycle") => engagement with qualifications (we've discussed this angle before, iirc)

1938 (Weer at 24) Coldhouse prank.

1939 (Weer at 25) the Chinese Garden dream.

Okay, the only problems are "age of the bicycle," which could be fixed by moving the picnic two years back to 1933; and the date of Olivia's death, which I haven't placed here (because you did not mention where it goes), since it complicates matters between Smart and Weer, including Weer's employment.

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Right, this goes well with Robert Borski's idea that Weer accused Smart of killing Olivia, either by turning her into a "monster" or more directly (in this example, by arranging her murder). It was this exchange of words (or whatever happened at Olivia's funeral) which made Smart refuse to talk to Weer again (and makes the job placement angle so tricky).

=mantis=

Sirius Fiction

booklets on Gene Wolfe, John Crowley
29 copies of "Snake's-hands" until OP!

Roy C. Lackey — 19 Aug 2002, 05:48 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

mantis quoted and wrote:

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I agree that the "age of the bicycle" and the picnic are linked, but that happened when Weer and Margaret were in high school (107), not after college. In Weer's "what went wrong" speech (201), his plans for their future included that he would inherit, between the ages of twenty

and thirty, his father's estate; his twentieth birthday was still in the future of those plans. Those plans did not include working for Smart; at that point he thought he had no need and ,anyway, Smart's plant did not then exist. Weer should have been in high school from 1928-1932. His father had not yet suffered the loss of his farm-based wealth to the Depression, so that picnic probably occurred during Weer's 1st or 2nd year of high school, when he was 14 or 15, which also fits in with the bicycles and virginity angle. Weer was definitely still living at home with his parents the day of the picnic; that's when he had the dream of Margaret, the dog boy, and his father (146).

He told the Tilly tale to Margaret on that picnic, which may have turned her against him (as you have suggested before). Or she may just have lost interest when the Weers lost their fortune.

-Roy