

PEACE: Coldhouse prank, facts and function

The Urth list — 4 messages, 3 voices, 20 Aug 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3416>

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 20 Aug 2002, 22:48

1) At first Weer seems disturbed that French would tell the reporter about the prank (and we assume we know why: because it is bad news, however old), and French's explanation of his motive makes sense for French's frame of reference (1974 or thereabouts), but Weer still seems a bit . . . haunted.

2) Does Weer's haunted state require that he be the prankster? No, of course not: anybody can be frightened of seeing a ghost, not just the murderer.

3) And if Charlie Turner is a "unicorn" who came through the barriers, and deep down Weer knows Charlie is a fiction-come-to-life, then we have a wonderful chain about the objective reality of forgeries (Venus of Milo; Lou Gold's books; Tilly's freaks; even Quantrill's tryst with Kate?) meeting up with the oft-repeated "summoning ghosts by speaking of them" thread of PEACE . . . meaning that, even if Weer knows that the prank is a legend, he is also aware that in the memory mansion when one speaks of a character (as Weer was trying to tell Bill Baton about the Tilly story) a character can suddenly appear, even if it is a person Weer never really met in his mortal life, even if it is a person who never really existed outside of a story. To talk of it is to call it up in the place where Weer is.

4) The joke is on Weer, however, since on one level I hope we can all agree on (and we've gone over this before), Weer himself is a ghost haunting the coldhouse. To have a ghost frightened of meeting a ghost in a haunted place is pretty funny, and it may show a lot about Weer's resistance to the idea that he is really and truly dead (not the last man on Earth, not a senile man wandering in a ruin, not a boy dreaming, nor any of the other explanations).

=mantis=

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 20 Aug 2002, 23:04 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

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All but the last three words. Why there? Not "why" as in "why would he be there," but "why" as in "what, in the text, supports the conclusion that this is where Weer's ghost is hanging out?"

Michael Andre-Driussi — 21 Aug 2002, 00:24 · follows Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

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How about "haunting the coldhouse (of the non-corporeal memory mansion that Weer inhabits, if not all the time, at the very least, during the frametale)"?

(Though I suppose one might argue that, via the "room" Weer has entered the actual timeline of reality . . . but such reasoning would seem to play hell with the idea of Charlie Turner being a unicorn, since Bill Baton saw him, and Miss Birkhead saw him, too . . . so unless Baton and Birkhead are being puppetized, doing things they didn't really do in real life, then maybe Charlie is real, his visit is real, and only his Doris letter is a unicorn?)

I certainly did =not= mean: "Weer is the ghost starring in the story of the coldhouse prank (about a young man who died in 1938)"! I apologize if it was taken that way.

=mantis=

Roy C. Lackey — 21 Aug 2002, 14:30 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

mantis wrote:

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Other characters are being "puppetized", to the extent that words are being put into their mouths by frametale-Weer that could not possibly have been uttered by them in real life. In addition to Sherry's noncommittal response to Weer's comment about the stroke he hadn't had in real life, there is the business with Lois questioning Weer's having given her a future phone number, sans exchange letters, and his telling her that he had been waiting for her at his desk (and he was, so to speak--in the frametale) when in real life he had waited in his car. She asked if he meant he had propped a book against the steering wheel. Such comments would never have been made by her in real life. And, of course, the entire conversation 4-year-old Den had with Dr. Black never happened outside of the frametale. Parts of Weer's visit(s) with Dr. Van Ness contain dialogue that never happened except in the memory mansion.

There's no doubting that Weer just made up stuff and wrote it down as truth, as I've just shown. The question remains: how much of what he "wrote down" didn't really happen quite that way, or didn't happen at all? Part of the answer has to do with why he was writing and who he was writing for. Was he writing for himself? God? For therapy? Penance? Other?

-Roy