

DOORS: Klamm, Green

The Urth list — 7 messages, 5 voices, 27 Jan 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3814>

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Roy C. Lackey — 27 Jan 2003, 06:12

Fanny's account of Lara being Klamm's "stepdaughter" wasn't true; that was just a popular cover story put out to satisfy public curiosity about why such a desirable young woman should be seen so much in the company of an old man. Green figured that out and told Klamm so, which Klamm admitted, in so many words. (300) Klamm was never married; there was no ex-wife, or if there was, that woman was Lara. The "favorite student" (141) the former wife was said to have been when Klamm was at the university, the wife, the ex-wife, the stepdaughter, were all Lara at different stages of Klamm's life. She assumed different roles as he aged.

Klamm had been Lara's lover when he was young man, when he was "younger than" Green (301), who was about 35 at that point. Let's say that Klamm was her lover when he was in his twenties. How old is Klamm? Though still in government service, he is described as a "crag-faced old man" with "cheeks pulled flaccidly downward by the weight of years". (96) I think he's in his seventies. Like Green, Klamm was a Visitor. (302) So, for close to fifty years Klamm had been living in the Otherworld; that had to be the case for him to have worked his way up from a non-English speaking foreigner to a Cabinet level position. No matter which of the time-rate ratios put forward recently is used, that means that Klamm had to have crossed over from our world 400 to 700 years ago! He was Lara's lover before Captain Billy. He called Green Herr K only because Green reminded him of himself when he was young.

I think I can explain the confusion early in the book about the buck-toothed doctor not seeming to know Green's name until prompted. The doctor wasn't lying either, later in the book, about having seen Green more times than he remembered. The day he came in looking for Lara was the first time Green had been to the clinic in some years. He had been there a number of times before years ago, back when he had his breakdown after his mother died. The doctor recognized him by sight, but couldn't remember his name until she correctly mistook his explanation of viridian as his name. Then she remembered.

Green didn't consciously remember having been to the clinic before because he was suppressing the memory of having been a mental patient, because he thought such a man to be unworthy of Lara. He was right about Lara lying when she said that they had met at the doctor's office. She had picked him up in the park. (267-68) Remember the account he gave North of Lara: "We've been living together for the past few days. With no job, Lara couldn't pay her rent." (40) If she had been a receptionist, then she had a job. Not having a job was just another lie she told to rationalize her living with him for a while. She changed her hair and eye colors to muddle the issue.

Lara introduced Green to Klamm as her "friend Adam K. Green". (293) I don't know where she got the "Adam K." part, but I doubt that was his real name. It was her half-hearted attempt to spare the feelings of her former lover by calling a newer lover just a "friend". As Green himself told her, "I think you like _Billy_--like the name." (280) Herr Klamm was "Adalwolf Wilhelm Klamm". (293) The captain was "William Hurst". (278) She didn't want to rub it in Klamm's face that Green was another in a long line of Williams.

-Roy

Michael Andre-Driussi — 27 Jan 2003, 18:41 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Once again I find my recent investigations put me on the same page with Roy. I agree with everything (Klamm is a visitor; Klamm is Lara's ex-lover, and he isn't dead; Klamm is in his seventies) except a few points.

No matter which of the time-rate ratios put forward recently is used, that means that Klamm had to have crossed over from our world 400 to 700 years ago!

No, because one of my timeflow plans involves a ratio reversal which, over time (8 years, 10 years?), cancels out the differences. For instance, let's say that in Otherworld Winter the ratio is 11:1 (11 e-days for 1 o-day) and in O-Spring the ratio is 14:1 (14 e-days for 1 o-day). This is given in the text. Now with simple symmetry, we could try O-Summer as 1:11 (the "opposite" of O-Winter) and O-Autumn as 1:14.

He was Lara's lover before Captain Billy. He called Green Herr K only because Green reminded him of himself when he was young.

I think he was Lara's lover after Captain "Blaze-Away Billy" William Hurst. (It would be neat if we could find a text with Captain Billy in it . . . I tried the footnotes for FLASHMAN, but no luck there.)

MORE ON KLAMM

Using Adam Stephanides's tip that Klamm comes from Kafka's THE CASTLE (thanks, Adam!), I poked around on the internet. Klamm is, in fact, involved in a love triangle with K.: Klamm's mistress is Frieda; Frieda becomes attracted to K. and moves into his apartment; they become engaged to be married; K. catches his assistant "playing" with Frieda so he sends him away; the assistant spies K. interviewing Frieda's rival, reports to Frieda, Frieda breaks off the engagement with K. and moves in with the assistant (whose name begins with "J"; which is funny because K. on the telephone calls himself Joseph).

So anyway, on the Kafka track, Lara = Frieda. (And I think that the Castle itself = Overwood. Not to be the bummer here, but one scenario for the conclusion to THE CASTLE is that K., on his deathbed, finally gets permission to visit the Castle he has been trying to get to for the entire novel.)

THE CASTLE was published in 1926, iirc, and that is where in time I posit that Klamm crossed over. Captain Billy was sailing in the 19th century, sometime after 1840.

GODDESS LOVER DATE

Cybele Attis ???

|||

La Belle Dame (a knight) medieval times

Leucothea Fitzhugh William Hurst 1840+

(L?) Frieda Wilhelm Klamm 1926

Lara Morgan "Green" 1984+

(The alphabetic progression in the goddess's name from "LF" to "LM" is clear in the text. I'm not sure if "LG," "LH," "LI," "LJ," and "LK" are implied between these two posts or not.)

Anyway, looking at it this way we can see a pattern closer to the natural life-span than 700 years for Klamm.

(So far we've done a good job of keeping the Arthuriana out of the mix: we deserve a prize of some kind! But now let us go ahead and say, yes, "Lara Morgan" is to "Morgan la Fey" as "Overwood" is to "Avalon.")

(The connection between Captain Billy and Green: aside from his attraction to the desk, there is also Green's fantasy about writing the letter just prior to some sort of ship action [was that the Captain's death?], and long before this is the first few pages of the book, where Green fantasizes that he is in a small boat at sea with Lara.)

SOLAR HERO

Since my timeflow pattern above may have tipped my hand, I might as well come out with it: Green shows signs of being a solar hero. He was "born" in Otherworld in January (the old sun dies at the winter solstice, near the end of December).

William North is identified with the direction North, not only because of his name but because when they are driving, Green notes the choice North makes is North. North is the direction of ice and Winter; Winter is the opposite of Summer, when the Sun has travelled as far North as possible. (The Otherworld is in the grip of a Winter which seems like an ice-age to us, fwiw.)

The fight between North and Green thus becomes the seasonal battle between Winter and Summer, Darkness and Light, at the vernal equinox. The young sun has grown strong enough to do battle with the forces of darkness and emerge triumphant.

I mentioned before that Graves has his own calendar, which Otherworld does not seem to be following. But North might be following it: in his confession he says he killed Applewood on January 21st (294). This date might not ring any bells for our calendar senses, but it is the first day of the second lunar month in the Graves calendar: the month of Quickbeam (Rowan). Four months after this (i.e., the time of the boxing match) is the deadly month of Hawthorn.

This seasonal theme is not the pattern associated with Attis, but with his other forms Adonis (Aphrodite vs. Persephone), Tammuz (Ishtar vs. Ereshkigal), and Osiris (Isis vs. Set). In these myths, Winter is explained as the goddess in mourning and Summer is the goddess happy with the return of her lover.

Anyway, North pulls his guns and tries to kill Klamm, according to one perspective. This is the traditional "golden bough" scenario, where the new comer tries to kill the old priest in order to become the new priest. But North is a bit flummoxed by the recent revelation that Lara knows Green and Green loves Lara, so he shoots at Green and ends up being killed himself.

BACK TO KLAMM

Klamm's reward for Green is all the cryptic knowledge he reveals and a safe place in the "temple": I think he is saying that Green should settle in with Fanny and then maybe later the goddess will visit him. But no, even while Green is not going to kill his predecessor (atonement with the father? breaking with the bloodrites of the past?), still Green is not going to fall for that "bait and switch" routine -- he leaves the temple to go to the Forbidden Zone, the land of the goddess. To me this looks like the choice between a long safe life (like Klamm has had?) or a short glorious-like-the-Sun life.

SELF-MUTILATION

There are several cases of Otherworld cultural tidbits that wash over to Earth: the seductress parade, the bridegroom in black (198), and perhaps even the genital mutilation that Attis is famous for (280), because it would seem that self-castration would be a method for O-men to avoid coital death.

(The file on North mentions that he is a self-mutilator, fwiw.)

=mantis=

P.S. Some hurt Lexicons up for auction on eBay.

Adam Stephanides — 29 Jan 2003, 15:02 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

on 1/27/03 12:41 PM, Michael Andre-Driussi at mantis at siriusfiction.com wrote:

I think he was Lara's lover after Captain "Blaze-Away Billy" William Hurst. (It would be neat if we could find a text with Captain Billy in it . . . I tried the footnotes for FLASHMAN, but no luck there.)

Captain Billy's Whiz Bang? <g> This was a popular American humor magazine of the 1920s and 1930s, though far less sophisticated than the New Yorker; see http://www.compedit.com/whiz_bang.htm if you're interested. Actually, for Wolfe to have deliberately inserted the allusion to CBWB seems like the sort of "joke" Wolfe would enjoy.

Using Adam Stephanides's tip that Klamm comes from Kafka's THE CASTLE (thanks, Adam!)

Incidentally, I've been rereading THE CASTLE, and I wasn't quite correct when I said that there are no indications that Klamm took any interest in K.'s welfare. K. receives two letters from Klamm in which Klamm claims to take a personal interest in him. OTOH, in one scene Klamm goes out of his way to avoid meeting K. face-to-face, and K. is repeatedly told that such a meeting is impossible.

(And I think that the Castle itself = Overwood. Not to be the bummer here, but one scenario for the conclusion to THE CASTLE is that K., on his deathbed, finally gets permission to visit the Castle he has been trying to get to for the entire novel.)

Iirc, Max Brod (Kafka's friend and literary executor, though now regarded as an unreliable interpreter of Kafka) said that K. on his deathbed was to receive permission, not to visit the Castle, but to settle in the village. Other similarities between THE CASTLE and TAD: in both, the main character goes to a strange place and tries to establish himself there, and in both, this "establishment" is linked to a woman. OTOH, in TAD Green wants to get established to be near Lara; while in THE CASTLE K. seems to value his relationship with Frieda primarily because he thinks it will help him get established. Also, the "twitter of bird-like voices, the voices of Japanese children, or of music boxes tuned to speak" (42-3) that Green hears when he phones his apartment is very similar to what K. hears on the phone line to the Castle.

THE CASTLE was published in 1926, iirc, and that is where in time I posit that Klamm crossed over.

That's right; but Kafka abandoned work on it in 1922, which might be another possible date. (It was published, unfinished, after his death.)

--Adam

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 31 Jan 2003, 16:36 · follows Adam Stephanides

Adam wrote ...

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Aside from the well-known "The Music Man" reference, there's another thing that might be of interest ... a subtle joke known to some comix fans, perpetrated by C.C. Beck and the Dell comix group back in the '50s, when they created CAPTAIN Marvel. BILLY Batson, in the pages of WHIZ Comics, would say the magic word "Shazam!" to become the Captain with a bolt of lightning that usually included the sound effect: BANG.

Yes, Beck confirmed years ago that this was deliberate...

Adam Stephanides — 01 Feb 2003, 05:07 · follows Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

on 1/31/03 10:36 AM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes at ddanehy at siebel.com wrote:
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Yes, Beck confirmed years ago that this was deliberate...

Neat! I'm a fan of Beck's Captain Marvel, but I never noticed that.

Actually, Captain Marvel was published not by Dell, but by Fawcett -- which got its start with Captain Billy's Whiz Bang; Capt. Wilford H. Fawcett was the original "Captain Billy." So the joke has more of a point than you thought.

--Adam

Tami Whitehead — 01 Feb 2003, 05:53 · follows Adam Stephanides

Hang on True Believers,
Make mine Marvel!!

Your intrepid razorkittee
Tami

--- Adam Stephanides <adamsteph at earthlink.net> wrote:
on 1/31/03 10:36 AM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes at ddanehy at siebel.com wrote:

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Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 03 Feb 2003, 16:44 · follows Tami Whitehead

Adam S wrote:

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Fawcett -- which got its start with Captain Billy's Whiz
Bang; Capt. Wilford H. Fawcett was the original "Captain
Billy." So the joke has more of a point than you thought.

Oops ... and I even knew that. If I recall correctly, when Detective Comics Comics began
publishing revisionist tales of the Big Red Cheese, in the late '70s, they memorialized the
original publisher by placing his adventures in "Fawcett City."

The rest of this note is kind of a reply to Razorkittee's "Make Mine Marvel!"

While I was always more a fan of DC's comics than those of Marvel-in-the-Stan-Lee sense, the
whole Captain Marvel business remains kind of a sore spot after fifty years ... for those who
don't know, DC sued Fawcett, claiming that Captain Marvel was too similar to their leading
trademark character, Superman, and succeeded in putting Fawcett out of the comic business
completely. However, Marvel is not entirely innocent here either ...

In the 60 and early 70s, two comics companies came up
with new characters by the name of Captain Marvel.

One of these, if I recall correctly, and I'm sure someone will correct me if I'm wrong, was Dell,
whose Captain Marvel character had the particularly weird power of splitting his body up into
separate parts, which would then act independently to beat up the bad guys. His only

resemblance to CM-Classic was the shouting of a magic word -- "Split!" rather than "Shazam!" -- to activate his power.

The other was Marvel, who created Mar-Vell, a Kree warrior who eventually became a defender of Earth. In the '70s, he became the exclusive property, as it were, of Jim Starlin, who used him as the first foil for one of the great comics villains, Thanos, who sought to gain the love of Death* by presenting her with the Universe as a gift.

* Not Neil Gaiman's Death, a much simpler and more, well, elemental non-character.

Captain Mar-Vell eventually achieved the interesting distinction of being one of only two Marvel characters whose death was so important to the "meaning" of the Marvel universe that they have vowed never to bring him back: he died of cancer, and nothing the super-science of the various Marvel genius characters could do could save him. Like Ben Parker, whose death taught his nephew Peter that "With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility," Mar-Vell's death was hammered on to show that Super-Heroism Has Serious Consequences.

The Marvel group eventually created another character with the CM name (incidentally, they'd also created a rather pointless "Ms Marvel," during a period when they seemed to be creating cross-sex versions of many of their major characters [Spider-Woman, She-Hulk, etc.] as some kind of trademark-protection deal), a black woman from New Orleans who can turn into a beam of light.

But anyway, about Marvel and the Big Red Cheese.

There was a British knockoff of the character, who went by the name Marvelman. I have not been able to verify the following: Marvelman was created by Fawcett's British partners to continue the series with the serial numbers scraped off, when Fawcett ceased publication. Marvelman eventually ceased publication in the early '60s.

What is clearly true is that in the late '70s, one of Britain's hot young comix writers, Alan Moore (WATCHMEN, V FOR VENDETTA, FROM HELL, etc.) began publishing a radical new version of Marvelman, an examination of the superhero as either god or uebermensch or ... well ... _something_. It's one of his finest pieces of work, and when he stopped

writing it, Neil Gaiman took it over and into yet another radical direction.

ANYway, Marvel successfully forced them to change the name. So if you want to find out what Alan Moore did with the basic concepts of the Captain ("Shazam!") Marvel character, you need to look for back issues of MIRACLEMAN.