

PEACE: Dog Man and IODDAOS

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 01 May 2008

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Dave Tallman — 01 May 2008, 05:34

I just read "The Island of Doctor Death and Other Stories" and I'd like to use the symbol of the dog-man there to help interpret the story of Charles Turner and Doris.

In IODDAOS, Bruno helps Ransom because "you smell good" (and Dr. Death presumably smells evil). In the outer story, Tackman plays the role of both Bruno and Ransom. He senses that Dr. Black is doing harm to his mother and he goes for help. The police seem to believe that Dr. Black is innocent, but I trust Tackman's instincts. I suspect that Jason the drug pusher is either working for Black or helps him inadvertently by becoming his fall guy. Jason plays the role of one of Dr. Death's minions, probably the bull-man.

According to Dr. Death, "Ransom and I are a bit like wrestlers. Under various guises we put on our show again and again -- but only under the spotlight." That is, the battle of good vs. evil is played out over and over. I don't trust Dr. Death when he compares it to a fake performance (the Devil lies). As Tackie found out, evil was real in his world.

If Charles Turner the dog man is the same kind of character as Bruno, his story of Doris was asking for Weer for help against an evil that he "smelled." He is a "Turner," giving Weer a chance to turn his life around. There doesn't have to be a family connection between Weer and Doris. It seems that for once in his life Weer was willing to help another person. If Weer sent the "fairy godmother" then that's to his credit, even if it backfired. When Scrooge sent the turkey to the Cratchitts on Christmas day, he would have been a better person for trying even if the turkey had been stolen on the way. Doris could be this book's unfortunate version of Tiny Tim.

This one act of charity, failed though it was, provides a ray of hope for Weer. However, the failure may have discouraged him from future charity. He has given up on helping the carnival: "It had struck me that these were pictures of dead people."

More observations from IODDAOS:

1) Dr. Death says he will enhance the hero's sense of smell. It was the Fall of Man that gave knowledge of good and evil.

2) Dr. Moreau = "The Moor" in French = "The Black Man"

3) A bull-man is a Minotaur. In Greek myth Theseus, who defeated the Minotaur, is linked to Jason through Medea.

4) Dr. Death has shiny black hair. Dr. Black has a shiny waxed car.

5) Aunt Julie wears a fish-headed costume with a shiny silver dress. Her corresponding character in the inner story might be Golo, which sounds like Gollum, the LOTR monster who was always eating fish. Aunt Julie is helping Dr. Black get close to Tackman's mother so her

brother will not have to keep paying alimony.

6) Dr. Death has red-tipped cigarettes with golden dragons on the paper. The party decorations are red and gold paper masks made by Aunt Julie.

7) The "Other Stories" of the title are all other stories of good vs. evil, including our own (since Jackie is "you").