

TSH: Ted, rings, ghosts

The Urth list — 3 messages, 2 voices, 14 May 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5605>

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Roy C. Lackey — 14 May 2010, 19:27

By the time Bax was beaten by Ieuan, he had both the opal ring from the fish and Ted's ring. At that point he knew nothing at all about any hypothetical previous owner of the opal ring, and only what little Doris had told him about Ted. He didn't know then what Ted looked like. When writing about it, Bax decided that the big man who came between him and Ieuan must have been the boy's father, but that is not what he thought at the time of the beating: "At the time, because of his ring, I thought him something else; . . ." (50)

That "something else" must have been a ghost. It must have been that the big man was wearing a ring identical to the one on Bax's finger, the ring Doris had given him that had belonged to her dead husband.

Bax, at least, did not believe that a ghost could leave behind real, tangible objects. In talking to Doris, who had asked if he had seen any ghosts, he mentioned his first encounter with Emlyn. "I didn't make it up, and he wasn't a ghost. I know he wasn't because he dropped things. Real things. I still have them." (36) He meant, of course, the triannulus and "longlight".

Now a digression to an earlier topic. The text makes clear that Ted was a big man, taller and heavier than average Bax, and Black/Skotos was a small man, shorter than Bax. However, in later conversation with Emlyn, the boy asked Bax if he might be his father in disguise. Bax said no and asked if his father could disguise himself that well, and the boy said yes (161).

And that brings me back to Doris's bedroom and her visit by Ted. According to her, Ted's apparition had left behind an unspecified tangible object, with his initials in a corner of it. I think someone wondered earlier if the object might have been the triannulus. It seems doubtful, yet I can't rule it out. And if Zwart could really have disguised himself to look like Bax, then he might as easily have disguised himself to look like anyone, even Ted. And that opens up a whole can of worms.

Doris might not have said what the wet item was because she didn't know what it was. And the Ted she saw might not have been a ghost. Winkle/Winker and old Nick seemed to come and go as if by magic, as well as other figures from faerie.

Neither does any of this preclude Ted from somehow being Goldwurm.

If it seems as though I am pointing in different directions at the same time, it is because I am. I'm just trying to make sense of what there is to deal with.

-Roy

Mr Thalassocrat — 15 May 2010, 08:45 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

On Sat, May 15, 2010 at 4:57 AM, Roy C. Lackey <rclackey at stic.net> wrote:
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and Ted's ring. At that point he knew nothing at all about any hypothetical previous owner of the opal ring, and only what little Doris had told him about Ted. He didn't know then what Ted looked like. When writing about it, Bax decided that the big man who came between him and Ieuan must have been the boy's father, but that is not what he thought at the time of the beating: "At the time, because of his ring, I thought him something else; . . ." (50)

That "something else" must have been a ghost. It must have been that the big man was wearing a ring identical to the one on Bax's finger, the ring Doris had given him that had belonged to her dead husband.

That's certainly the way I understood it.

Bax, at least, did not believe that a ghost could leave behind real, tangible objects. In talking to Doris, who had asked if he had seen any ghosts, he mentioned his first encounter with Emlyn. "I didn't make it up, and he wasn't a ghost. I know he wasn't because he dropped things. Real things. I still have them." (36) He meant, of course, the triannulus and "longlight".

Note how the ring gets introduced in this first conversation with Doris. She wants to hear any ghost stories Bax might have; he tells her about his encounter with Emlyn and Emlyn's dropping stuff; she asks whether Bax's opal ring was one of those things; just after this, she gives Bax Ted's ring, after ascertaining that he's not married.

I think Doris knows some "stuff" and she is actively fishing for information here. She's really interested in that opal ring; hence my little theory about why she gave Ted's ring to Bax: she wants Bax to give her the other one (I guess a wedding ring).

Recall also that on the scary ride to the same restaurant later on, she says that of everybody she can think, she wishes Ted was with them - because, I think, she knows that Ted was involved with this "stuff" and would know how to handle it.

As to what the wet initialled object might have been at the end: perhaps Ted's shroud? Would that be monogrammed?

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Roy C. Lackey — 15 May 2010, 20:28 · in reply to Mr Thalassocrat

Andrew wrote:

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wants to hear any ghost stories Bax might have; he tells her about his encounter with Emlyn and Emlyn's dropping stuff; she asks whether Bax's opal ring was one of those things; just after this, she gives Bax Ted's ring, after ascertainING that he's not married.

Yet he had already told her he wasn't married when she picked him up to go to the restaurant (33).

I think Doris knows some "stuff" and she is actively fishing for information here. She's really interested in that opal ring; hence my little theory about why she gave Ted's ring to Bax: she wants Bax to give her the other one (I guess a wedding ring).

She came to the restaurant armed with Ted's ring, even though she said the sight of it caused her grief, which makes me think she must have been up to something. But how would she have known that Bax had the opal ring before she saw it on his finger? The only other person who even knew Bax had it was the jeweler he had shown it to that morning, who had said the ring was worthless. And her note with the flimsy excuse for asking him to lunch came in that same morning's mail.

If Ted is Someone Important, it seems just too coincidental that his wife would spontaneously make a play for a man she had thought was poor up to the minute she saw the opal ring on his finger. That would imply that she was ignorant of its sorcerous worth and saw only the potential wealth a cat's-eye opal suggested. That reduces her to a simple gold digger, not a knowing ally of her husband. Unless the coincidence was the result of Bax having messed with the triannulus and one of those "other things" that "fell into line as well" (33) came into play.

Recall also that on the scary ride to the same restaurant later on, she says that of everybody she can think, she wishes Ted was with them - because, I think, she knows that Ted was involved with this "stuff" and would know how to handle it.

Much the same way that Emlyn lamented his father not being around to tell him how to handle things.

As to what the wet initialled object might have been at the end: perhaps Ted's shroud? Would that be monogrammed?

I've never heard of a monogrammed shroud.

Let's run with the theory that Ted is Goldwurm and Doris his accomplice. Does that mean that he didn't die and she knows it? She faked being a widow for two years before Bax even came to town? Or he didn't die and she really thought he had, medical bills and all?

Why did she send the Dear John letter? The last time Bax saw her was in his driveway when she left to take Cathy to the hospital. The last he spoke to her was the next(?) morning when she phoned to confirm his suspicion that Martha had been one of the mourners at Skotos's funeral. The Dear John letter comes out of nowhere.

A Dear John letter is usually prompted by the gal finding another guy. Was there another guy? George? Then why turn right around and write the Terrible Mistake letter, set it aside, go to the house to help catch a vampire, then come home to write the postscript telling about it and mail it off?

-Roy