

The Man in the Pepper Mill

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 02 Feb 2000

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Robert Borski — 02 Feb 2000, 15:18

My spin on "The Man in the Pepper Mill" is, of course, unorthodox.

I believe it's more about the war between the sexes than anything spiritual.

Consider both the pepper mill and the light house: each overtly phallic symbols and therefore totems of masculinity. Tippy--a boy named after a _female_ writer, for cryingoutloud, and with no pater--needs a dad. Buster Hill--whose leg wound recalls the Fisher King (and the extended metaphor of sexual mutilation)--symbolically represents the man Tippy may grow into if he doesn't find proper male guidance. (Mr. Hill is also very wary about women--hence imagines himself a 'bust her,' or conquering sex hero.) In fact, Tippy already envisions himself trapped in a doll house and the plaything of girlz. (A Calvin fantasy, for sure. Where's Hobbes when he needs him?) And the thing that struck me about the stegosaur was its pinkness; given its well known spiked tail, perhaps a vagina dentata image. When Mom screams at the end, however, it's not because she sees a giant pink dinosaur; it's because the earthquake has shattered Cathy's dollhouse--perhaps signaling some hope for Tippy.

Anybody care to speculate how Cathy died? Tippy has no memories of lingering illness, so apparently it's sudden. And what about Mom's remark about Grandma? Has she drowned?

Robert Borski