

Mother, brother and sister

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 06 Jan 1998

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Terence Nickolette — 06 Jan 1998, 18:55

Christopher has posed an interesting question. But would you kind readers help me to understand the logic (or guesses) that lead to the conclusion that Katherine is Severian's mother and Merryn his sister?

In "The Feast" of Shadow, Severian describes Katherine (and the maid who plays her) as tall and slender, dark of complexion and hair. And he says "hers was such a face as I have never seen elsewhere, like a pool of pure water found in the midst of a wood." He is tall, with dark hair, and with very fair skin. A pool of pure water found in a wood would reflect the face of one who looked at it. GW seems to be telling us that Severian looks like Katherine.

But we are also told that the annual observance of Holy Katherine's feast has been going on for 300 years. "No one from without the guild has dined with us at the annual observance of Holy Katherine's feast for more than 300 years, when a lieutenant of the guard (so it is said) dared to come for a wager." It would seem logical that such an important ceremony would have a long history. If it has been observed for over 300 years, how can Katherine be Severian's mother?

As far as Merryn being his sister, please help me.....