

Thais the countessa

The Urth list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 29 Jul 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3380>

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 29 Jul 2002, 15:40

Recent talk of Thais as being Severian's daughter, and/or a sailor . . .

I thought that Thais was the best candidate for the character "the countessa" in "Eschatology and Genesis." In that play, the character speaks of having been accompanied by Praetorian Guards when she saw a strange man on the Road of Air in the House Absolute (II, 228) . . . in URTH, Severian enters the House Absolute, and on the Path of Air he looks down to see a lovely woman with black hair, weeping while surrounded by Praetorian Guards (293).

Even if this is true, Severian does not mention that Thais is that woman he saw.

=mantis=

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Jennifer Van Goethem — 29 Jul 2002, 16:37 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

--- Michael Andre-Driussi <mantis at siriusfiction.com>
wrote:

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Interesting. I can see the connection of this "raven haired", "olive skinned woman" to the play. If she is Thais, however, it does seem Severian would recognize her later on the boat.

I had always thought of this weeping woman surrounded by Praetorians as a Katherine of the torturers, mother of Severian. I bit of a limb walk, I know, but the view is cool.

I do like the idea of Thais being a courtesan/contessa. The name certainly supports that, if there is anything to the "Th" saint names used for Thecla and her sister.

Thais does have something to hide, which is quite intriguing. She reveals nothing about herself on the boat other than her name. A fact that Odillo points out with some consternation somewhere in that sequence. A woman of mystery, that Thais.

J

Robert Borski — 30 Jul 2002, 01:07 · follows Jennifer Van Goethem

Jen Van Gee again, still in a genealogical vein, writing:

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Well, don't walk too far out on that limb or you'll displace me because I've been arguing the Catherine-Contessa connection for years, both here and elsewhere.

For starters there's a physical resemblance between Catherine, Severian's mother, and the woman arrested--for now let's call her "Carina," the actual name of the contessa in _Eschatology and Genesis_.

Secondarily, Carina (or rather its homonymic variant, Karina) is not only the Scandinavian equivalent of Catherine, it's also a nested or cryptonymic name (that is, the letters c-a-r-i-n-a can all be found in Catherine). The events of E & G being meant to function as typological foreshadowing, Carina therefore equals Catherine.

Now for some speculation as to what it all means: Catherine, daughter of Valeria and Dux Caesidius (see my NYRSF essay, "Catherine and Beyond" for details), is being "arrested" by the agents of Father Inire so he (who knows she will eventually give birth to Severian) can ensure she will not be killed in the great flood about to be brought on by the arrival of the New Sun. Handed over to the Pelerines on the other side of the Corridors of Time (there's evidence the Cumaeen is the monials' secret leader), Princess Catherine does not enjoy her captive status,

runs away, meets Ouen--and the net result is Severian--plus the little sister who may be "Thais."

Mantis speculates in LU that the woman Severian hears crying in the Corridors of Time is Catherine herself. Perhaps it's because she knows she can now never return to the drowned world of her parents--only, if for a little while, the guild in which her son will grow to manhood.

Robert Borski