

Gender in TBOTLS

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 03 Mar 2003

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Che Monro — 03 Mar 2003, 13:21

I've been reading in the archives some speculation about gender changing in the Book of the Long Sun, in particular that Chenile and Hyacinth may have been male.

I remember the little guardsman character who used to dress up as a woman and hang around in bars, and how he got murdered and his friend missed him. That was sad, and funny.

Now people speculate that Hy might have been a male chem too. Well I suppose that there is no evidence against it, right? I find the romance between Silk and Hyacinth to be the sweetest and funniest part of the whole book. Her calling him little pet names and him jumping out of second floor windows to escape her clutches. That was so sweet and funny!

If in fact she was a man then it is still sweet and probably even funnier. I wonder though, on the Whorl whether a male chem who wanted to play the feminine part wouldn't be able to get hold of some female parts to play with? We know the little guardsman didn't, but perhaps Hyacinth was female in form, um, down there?

I wonder if "The Operation" was available for humans on the whorl? Pig gets his eyes back in the end, surgery that we couldn't do, so perhaps sex changes were possible, at least in Chenile's childhood. That would be an interesting character, a poor young boy who goes out gathering water cress with his family to stay alive, they hit hard times so decided to sell him to a whore house where he is made into a she in order to make more money. Talk about a strange existence!

Does anyone else notice Roman parallels in Wolf's work. There are some obvious Rome symbols in Nessus, but in the Long Sun both the religion and government seemed very Roman in character to me. Delightfully alien, yet familiar at the same time.

On Blue in Return to the Whorl where Horn and Silk were camped out in the barrel behind the shop, that place seemed a lot like Rome too. Their families, the way they treated their servants, the social ordering, the stories they told all seemed very Roman. And notice how Silk and Horn fitted right in without any difficulties?

I love Wolfe's spin on the Vampires in these books. So tragic, so human, and so strange. Utterly masterful.

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