

Mysterious Margaret

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 25 Oct 2008

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Dave Tallman — 25 Oct 2008, 17:29

Margaret Briggs seems like a nice, innocent character on the surface -- but I suspect that she is more than she seems. She seems to be a werewolf, and she may also be a spy for more than one side.

1. The initials M.B. match Mariah Brownlea, and as Cassie remarks Mariah believes in God but Cassie does not (p. 179). The matching initials suggest to me that Margaret's religion is likewise an act.
2. There's the clue of the werewolf's "swift loping walk, even in women." (p. 206). Margaret bobs along (p. 59). Does any other female character have a unique walk described?
3. She is gray (p. 54) with a colorless face (p. 57). Werewolves "dress in wolf shades: gray, black, and white." (p. 206).
4. They are also insensitive to color (p. 206). Margaret fails to get a straw for Cassie's drink (p. 57), indicating she doesn't care much about lipstick. She describes a costume which shows skin in the middle as "spring-green" (p. 107), but the costume that is spring-green is the long missionary gown (p. 190). The costume that shows ten inches of bare waist features a faux-grass skirt (p. 131). This would be grass-green, not spring-green. Perhaps Margaret can't tell the difference. (Incidentally, there's a contemporary artist named Mary Margaret Briggs who makes sepia-toned monotypes with plants -- this might be another color clue).
5. She avoids an obvious word when misreporting the name of Sharon Bench as "Shirley Ladydog" (p. 86). As a werewolf female she might be extra-sensitive to this word.
6. Werewolves have a hard time avoiding slipping back to wolf form (p. 100). They also "want the wild and a liberation from human morality" (p. 207). Margaret's scrupulous morality may be an effort to avoid slipping back. Her elaborate trick with the napkin to avoid a direct lie is an example of this (pp. 82-83).
7. Margaret always has yogurt and fruit for breakfast (p. 186). She may avoid eating meat to keep from setting off her wolf nature.

Now for the issue of her being a spy:

1. Easter Sinclair's jewelry was stolen while Margaret was working for her (p. 140). Margaret could have taken them.
2. Something happened between Margaret and Alexis. ("I see you know," India said on p. 54). Alexis seems to have fired her, owing her \$3000 that Margaret didn't expect to collect (p. 57). I think Reis planted her on Alexis as a spy, knowing of Chase's interest in the

theater (p. 207) and expecting him to use the leading lady as bait in a trap. When Reis was told that Cassie was involved (probably by Lieutenant Lars Aaberg who picked her up for Chase and who also worked for Reis p. 201), then Margaret was ordered to switch to working for Cassie.

3. Her kidnapping might be the work of another faction (probably the FBI p. 192) to get her out of the way. One of the kidnappers seems to wear werewolf colors (birch with black stripes p. 167), and he may have identified her as another one.

4. Like many of the other characters, she could be a double-agent. The fingering of the upstairs neighbor for the Squid God's killers could well be her work. How else would the assassin know that Cassie even knew his name? (p. 250).

5. She had the opportunity to go after Jimmy and scare him to death when she was sent for the stage manager (p. 58). She seems to pick up on Jimmy's death too quickly at the cast party (p. 65). She knew that Jimmy had heard Reis' voice and might be able to identify him (p. 56). Since he failed to bring Cassie out to the alley they had no further use for him.

6. Cassie doesn't call her from the South Seas, unlike her other friends. Could Chase's warnings of the marks of a werewolf have caused her to suspect Margaret?

Margaret failed to recognize the changed Cassie at the end (p. 292). It's probably just as well she didn't.