spys in Short Sun

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 25 Dec 2001

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maa32 — 25 Dec 2001, 16:33

Please forgive me if this post repeats older material and rips off anyone's ideas. The computer I am working on now is so painfully slow that to review the archives would take a million years. As I was re-reading the Book of the Short Sun, it struck me that the individual events that make up the text involve female spys working to subvert peace and order. In the first book, I'm sure we've discussed how Evensong (Chota) was probably a spy for Han, since she was upset when called the Man of Han's woman, and then tried to find all about the inhuma when the narrator escaped with her (after she got a "boat for a single spy"). Fava and Mora where spies, and in Return to the Whorl the dream the narrator has in Chapter 4 involves Spider, the spy catcher, saying that it's all dirt, and has Fava and Mora pointing down at Hyacinth, obviously implicated as a spy at this point due to her lesbian relationship on the Triviguante Ship in Exodus from the Long Sun. These females form a long line of spies that permeate the text. I think the most important distinction to make is whether or not Seawrack is a spy for the Mother. In On Blue's Waters, Horn posits the "main riddle" that the Mother may desire Seawrack to mingle with mankind to be a better lure, a more effective bait, or something equally sinister. If all these spy subplots point to Seawrack as a spy (and the name Evensong sailing in a boat with the narrator tends to evoke images of Seawrack), then perhaps Silk's departure at the end of the Book of the Short Sun is a real sacrifice: he bites the bullet, takes the spy with him to remove her from the Mother's employment permanently, thus destroying the Mother's eyes in the world and blinding her, as he reversed the blindness of Pig and Maytera Marble. (Vision is a big part of the Book, too.) Silk steals the siren and saves the world from the evil machinations of Mother, a victory for men everywhere and a fine answer to "fair young girls live to deceive you, sad experience teaches me." Once again, I have no idea how much of this has been discussed before since I didn't read the books until the discussion had gone in a very different direction and have been grossly negligent in reviewing the archives. Marc Aramini