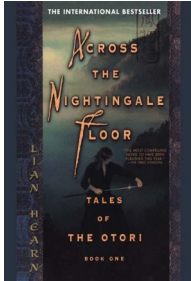




Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians



Across the Nightingale Floor By Lian Hearn *Discussed March 2004*

Discussion Questions

1. *Across the Nightingale Floor* is not set in Japan, even though its lands are clearly based on our world. Do you think Hearn should have set the book in a real setting or used his faux-Japan?
2. Takeo and Kaede are the two protagonists of the book, but while Takeo's chapters are told in the first person, Kaede's are in the third person. Is one character more important than the other? How does the conclusion of the book agree or disagree with this?
3. Almost all characters in *Across the Nightingale Floor* are not who they appear to be. Is anyone truly as they appear on the surface? How do they stand out from the rest of the characters in the book as a result?
4. Two major events of the novel--the death of a main character and the falling of a city--both occur "off-screen", relayed to us as a reader second-hand or mentioned only in passing. Why do you think Hearn made this decision as an author? How did these choices impact you as a reader?
5. When Takeo is brought in by Shigeru he says, "And so between the waterfall and the top of the mountain I lost my name, became someone new, and joined my destiny with the Otori." By the end of the novel, though, Takeo has decided that even with a new name he cannot escape his heritage. Which line of thinking do you think was more accurate?
6. Takeo makes a choice at the end which part of his identity he must embrace for the time being: Hidden, Tribe, or Otori. Do you think he made the right decision? Why or why not?
7. This book's official genre, according to the back cover, is "fiction". It's usually shelved in the science-fiction/fantasy section of the bookstore, and has also been called historical fiction and romance. Which genre would you describe it best as?