

Sinew

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 30 Apr 2015

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/6758>

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Charles Gillingham — 30 Apr 2015, 22:34

To me, Sinew is one of the most interesting characters in Short Sun. How his character is perceived in the narrative vs what's he's actually like. And how Wolfe likes to play around show vs tell.

Horn has a low opinion of Sinew, saying how he's always been afraid Sinew would kill him or the other members of the family. But really, what evidence in the text leads us to believe that Sinew is a bad dude? Other than Horn's opinion? Sinew is always out getting food for his family. He talks about defending them from the Inhum. He gives his most prized possession to the father that hates him. Then he builds a boat that's basically a box, risks his life to cross the ocean to join up and help his dad. The only thing he does that might be deemed wrong is abandoning Horn after he's wounded, but that's only logical in their situation. After that he goes on to become the leader of a village and a probable loving father.

(We all knew this of course just wanted to write it out to prove my point.)

What in the actual story of Short Sun, does Sinew do, that would show us he's a bad person? Nothing! He's a hero! He's always risking his life to help others. Even Krait isn't that bad, he saves Horn after all, never attacks humans, and even betrays his own kind to try and save the people on the lander. I guess, maybe, Horn's opinion of his son changes over the novel, maybe influenced by the fact that's he becomes Silk. Silk will forgive people where Horn wouldn't. Or maybe Horn's white washing Sinew's actions in the storyline just like he did with Auk.

On a personal note, I feel a little bit like Sinew. I'm the oldest son, and my idiot father (along with idiot teachers) always assumed I was a violent person, that I was a threat to him or my siblings, when I'm really not. ?People don't want other people to be people. Its easier to assign a simple value to people, put them in little boxes, for no reason other than brevity, laziness, of thought. Perhaps Sinew made some little mistake when he was a child and had no real conscience control over his actions. To paraphrase "before he stole Nettle from me". Maybe Horn is just jealous of a mother's love for her son, so would always jump to the worse conclusion about Sinew. If the Horn family (lets name them the Scratchy family lol) is semi biographical of the Wolfe family, maybe the real story is Wolfe subtly admitting he wasn't the best father, as all good fathers will do at some point.

Maybe I'm reading too much into this. Maybe Sinew is just a cruel, one dimensional bastard who only likes pain and violence. He's the torturer just like all men. Maybe the best ending to his story is a death where an Inhum won't drink his blood and make another Krait.