

Horn and Sinew's enmity (part 1)

The Whorl list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 01 Sep 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1001>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

Endymion9 — 01 Sep 2000, 17:47

I'm about 1/4th way through OBW looking for clues to why Sinew and Horn hate each other, as well as investigating the possibility that Sinew is an inhum (as I laid out in more detail in a previous post).

p.19 - Hoof says "Sinew's here too" Did Horn get the needler because Sinew was there or the men in boat? I think Sinew.

p.20 - Horn already dreads Sinew. Wants him to be away from their home often. Sinew sneered when asked to use the telescope? (Only seems to have respect for weapon technology. Why? Because of beastlike/hunter nature?) Sinew could never sharpen a knife properly? (For such a hunter??) Nettle did it for him. Although he (Sinew) pretended he could.

Not being able to sharpen a knife but pretending he could sounds inhum-ish.

p.22 - Sinew carried out all the chairs

p.26 - Sinew supplied the roast

p.27 - I've always been gentle with you for your mother's sake (Horn to Sinew). Although I loved him (Sinew) I did not like him. Not then, although things were different on Green. Nor did he like me, I feel certain. I gave Sinew who had always eaten like fire in good times and had a thick slice with plenty of gristle.

From these passages the idea I am toying with is that Sinew hunts animals, drains the blood to feed himself and brings the meat to Horn and the rest of the family. This would explain Sinew's beastlike nature.

p.29 He tilted his chair back against the wall, something that always annoyed me. Sinew came to his brother's defense surprising and pleasing me. p.30 - at reference to chems Sinew thumps down chair? Sinew used a bow???

The reference to Sinew using a bow and one that follows about making a boat make me wonder if Sinew could be an inhum/human crossbreed? Characteristics of both. I'm still wondering if Krait's mother took some part of Sinew's *soul* which she imbued to Krait but also imparted something to him (inhum nature??).

p.32 - Sinew upset about conjunction coming

This passage doesn't sound very inhum-ish. Unless it's dreading what other inhum could do to his family.

p.34 - Horn envies Sinew's energy and dexterity.

Promises meant very little to Sinew as I had reason to know.

I assume this has to do with Sinew's dissertation on Green. Did Sinew ever promise Horn anything? Helping him get to the whorl? Helping him on Green? I don't recall any mention of a promise. Merely Sinew suddenly fighting beside his father on the lander and on Green. Did Horn assume this was a promise?

p.35 - Sinew so close can feel breath on me.

Have we had any references to inhumis actually breathing? Or have I just assumed they do?

p.36 - He loped beside me like an ill bred dog.

I laughed, pretending a warmth of feeling that I did not feel.

p.37 - Horn offers needler. Sinew rejects. I recalled no argument of mine had ever changed his mind. Sinew takes needler so Horn won't throw it away.

Does Sinew reject because he can't use a needler. If he is some type of human/inhumi crossbred can he handle tools better than inhumis but not as good as other humans?

p.38 - Strangers. Visitors. Very plausible ones sometimes

Did Horn and Nettle invite Krait's mother in and feel guilty about it? I think others have already speculated that here.

p.41 - For so many years I feared that he would try to murder me, but in the end it was I who would have murdered him.

Because of his betrayal on Green? I still want to get to the bottom of why Horn thinks Sinew hates him so much and why Horn has such enmity towards Sinew.

p.42 - Sinew resembles Horn. Devilish?

Other's quotes this line previously. Inhumis quality of mimicking?

Horn is jealous of Nettle's love for Sinew. He had already taken her from me.

This line makes me think of an old George C. Scott movie "The Savage Is Loose" (1974). Where a man, his wife and their child are isolated on an island. The son and father start out very close friends. As the child grows and develops sexual desires he begins to compete with the father for the mother's affections. I'm not suggesting any incestuous feelings between Sinew and Nettle. The line in OBW does suggest a more normal rivalry between a growing father and son. But what could drive it to such levels of hatred. Merely Horn jealous of a baby stealing his wife's attention? I doubt it is the case here.

p. 56 - Try to find an honest man anywhere who would willingly say that Sinew's moral development ever benefited from anything. He was brave on Green, at least, and loyal for a time.

p.73 - Sinew will build a boat. It will be good that he watch it grow under his hands.

While pursuing this line of thought I came across other lines that raised questions for me. Some of the following are just comments.

p.39 Why would accepting Morrow's boat have resulted in a "serious loss" ?

p.56 - I know better now, of course.

About the gods. Because he is Pas/Silk/Horn? Other's have mentioned this reference.

p.57 - Remora reference to gods of whorl preventing gods of Blue from scourge - ing.

The gods of whorl protecting Blue worshippers? I think the gods definitely have a presence on Blue. Not just Scylla.

p.59-62 - Prayed to Pas, Scylla & Outsider. Then leatherskin (6 legs) grasps boat. Possessed by Scylla? Once again others have already mentioned this ref.

p.65 - Horn wishes for a daughter or two. Interesting foreshadow of Fava and Jahlee? Horn is 35, thick bodied and balding. <others have mentioned>

p.74 - Horn dreamed that he had killed Silk.

By taking his body as Silk lay dying?

p.88 - What draws Mucor to the Mucor's Rock? Not just her spirit but in body she travels there and stays long times. So Marble moves there with her.

p.92-93 - Marble predicts Horn's death, rebirth. Riding a beast w/3 horns. He rode it when he was fatally wounded on Green. Do we know what beast this was that Horn rode on Green. I don't recall reading it in IGJ.

p.95 Silk tells Mucor it will be dangerous for Horn to come. It will endanger Silk and Hyacinth. He tells Mucor not to reveal his whereabouts. Why is it dangerous? Because the Travaguanti <sp?> don't want him to leave the whorl? Why is it dangerous to Hyacinth? Because they use her as blackmail to keep Silk from running off? Is that what finally caused Hyacinth to die? Because Silk had decided to go to Blue?

p.101 How did Marble lie to Hammerstone? So bad that he would want to kill her. They never completed their daughter? I know I'm foggy on this but I thought they did complete their daughter (Olivine)? Am I having another Alzheimer's moment?

Well that's as far as I've gotten. Will post more later.

Dennis/Endy

<http://home.mindspring.com/~endymion9/index.htm>

*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.

Fernando Q. Gouvea — 02 Sep 2000, 09:42 · follows Endymion9

One thing that these quotes suggest is that (at the beginning, at least) there is more enmity on Horn's part than on Sinew's. Horn depicts himself as a father who just won't give his son a chance, who already knows before the test comes that Sinew will fail. This might be based on past experience; in fact, Horn intimates to us that it is. But it's hard to see how Sinew could have earned back his father's friendship and confidence given this attitude on Horn's side. So I am under the impression that this hatred and distrust is Horn's doing at some level. But why?

Fernando

Fernando Q. Gouvea
Department of Mathematics Editor, FOCUS and MAA Online
Colby College Mathematical Association of America
Waterville, ME 04901 <http://www.maa.org>
fqgouvea@colby.edu
=====

What garlic is to food, insanity is to art.

*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.

Adam Stephanides — 02 Sep 2000, 15:46 · follows Fernando Q. Gouvea

Fernando Q. Gouvea wrote:

One thing that these quotes suggest is that (at the beginning, at least)
there is more enmity on Horn's part than on Sinew's. [snip] So I am under the impression that this
hatred and distrust is Horn's doing at some level. But why?

That's my impression too. According to IGJ, the extreme poverty Horn and Nettle underwent
during their first years on Blue was caused partly by Nettle's being pregnant with Sinew and
later having to feed him. I once suggested (in connection with a speculation as to the Secret,
which I won't repeat), that this may have led Horn to consciously or unconsciously wish Sinew
dead. Even if my speculation as to the Secret is wrong, my guess at Horn's feelings may be
right, and Horn's guilt at these feelings may unconsciously lead him to ascribe his own hostility
to Sinew.

--Adam

*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.

Tim Boolos — 05 Sep 2000, 07:55 · follows Adam Stephanides

--- Adam Stephanides <adamsteph@earthlink.net> wrote:
Fernando Q. Gouvea wrote:

One thing that these quotes suggest is that (at
the beginning, at least)
there is more enmity on Horn's part than on
Sinew's. [snip] So I am under the impression that
this
hatred and distrust is Horn's doing at some level.
But why?

That's my impression too. [*snip*] my guess at
Horn's feelings may be right,
and Horn's guilt at
these feelings may unconsciously lead him to ascribe
his own hostility
to Sinew.

--Adam

I wonder if this isn't part of the difficulties
Horn/Silk is having with the merger, so to speak.

I've posted before how the Horn side of the merged entity would be let down over Silk's failings, both real and imagined (not least of which would be his {Silk's} running after Hyacinth at the end of EfLS.) Could this have a tint of Silk's disappointment with the way Horn treated Sinew growing up?

Knowing that the narrator is part of the story and his purposes in writing the narrative are also part of the story I have to question why this shows up so often in OBW and only to a lesser degree in IGJ. Could the purpose of the narrator be changing as the narrative progresses. Wolfe has done this before with Soldier of Arete where Latro clearly (we learn at the end from Pindaros) had more in mind than just setting down his day to day events. My theory remains that the Horn/Silk merged entity is using the narrative of tBoTSS (among other things) to work out its identity and that the motives and purposes behind the work in progress are changing as we move along.

Emrys