

Why Sinew isn't Krait

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 03 Sep 2000

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Ian Smith — 03 Sep 2000, 12:11

I really like this idea Dennis, but if it is true it means that the narrator must be SERIOUSLY deluded. I can see where you get the idea however, and there is certainly something up because Wolfe is so darn vague. As far as I can see, Sinew & Krait never seem to have a conversation in OBW, and references to situations where they are both present are very sketchy indeed. The more I look for evidence one way or the other, the more I find ambiguous passages. For example, In OBW (p354):

[Horn] "It's almost as if they'd [people of Pajaracou] been waiting for us, isn't it?" [Sinew] "You think so?"..."Why should they?" [Horn] "Because there are three of us" [Sinew] "Four, with Krait" [Horn] "Exactly, four, if you count Krait, and three if you don't"

Hmm. No comment.

It's clear from the end of OBW that the narrator believes Sinew to be alive and Krait to be dead (e.g. p366). Horn tells Seawrack that "He's [Krait] actually quite a bit younger than my son Sinew" (OBW, p. 329). Oh ambiguity! When Sinew shows up, later on the same page, Seawrack reacted to his appearance "As if she had known him all her life".

But here's some strong evidence against (I think)....

p.331 Sinew used Horn's needler a lot before it was stolen

p.334 Sinew eats smoked meat (BUT p.340 Sinew chokes and coughs, saying the meat is good "but it takes a lot of chewing") p.335 Horn suggests that Sinew remains in Pajaracou to look after Seawrack, whilst he and Krait board the lander.

And finally (this is the killer)

"The inhumis had barricaded themselves in the nose, Krait and the rest. We had to fight the ones who still believed...if only Sinew had stayed with Seawrack as I had told him, I would have let the others fight, taking no part. He was there and would know, so I played General Mint for an audience of one, kicking off and yelling and hurtling toward them, yelling for him [Sinew] and the others to follow me..." (OBW p.380).

It's not totally conclusive, but it's enough for me. I've never known Wolfe to be quite THAT misleading.

Oh, and Hammerstone is mad at Marble because she pretended to be his long lost sweetheart Maggie so he would marry her.

Ian

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

Endymion9 — 03 Sep 2000, 13:42 · follows Ian Smith

Ian I have to agree with you. I am abandoning my theory that Sinew and Krait might be the same. I'm still sure we don't know the entire story behind their duality but it is not that Krait is Sinew.

The passage that finally convinces besides the Lander sequence at the end of Blue and the death of Krait on Green is the following.

OBW p.144 Sinew made a sketch that the smith used to produce Sinew's blade.

I don't believe Horn would have any reason to lie about that and an inhummi could not draw.

Some discussion has been going on concerning the inhummi's crossings during conjunction. Came across this passage today

OBW p.126 "A few of you seem to think that since the inhummi cross the abyss at conjunction they must leave before conjunction is past," I said. "Why should they, when there are so many of us here, so much blood for them? I tell you that though some who have tarried here for years will leave as the whorls conjoin, returning to Green to breed, most will remain. Do you doubt me?"

Read several strange passages today.

p.123-146 The Thing On The Green Plain, chapter. Did the mother's song transport Babbie and Horn to Green? Or even some other planet?

I was beginning to think that Horn's entire encounter with Seawrack, the Neighbor, the pit etc. had happened on Green in an astral visit until I reread the section where Wijzer encountered Horn, Seawrack and Babbie.

The other strange passage (I did not remember but seemed more significant on rereading knowing more about the neighbors) is

p. 161-2 The immortal Neighbor? What do you think of this strange neighbor?

Dennis/Endy

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