

Seawrack

The Whorl list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 06 Sep 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1015>

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Dan Schmidt — 06 Sep 2000, 09:56

Is this a common word? It appears to be a synonym for seaweed, but I don't remember encountering it before. I ask because I'm currently reading through ULYSSES and found it at the beginning of chapter 3:

Ineluctable modality of the visible: at least that if no more,
thought through my eyes. Signatures of all things I am here to read,
seaspawn and seawrack, the nearing tide, that rusty boot.

Dan Schmidt | <http://www.dfan.org>

Honest Bob CD now available! | <http://www.dfan.org/honestbob/cd.html>

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

Peter Westlake — 06 Sep 2000, 21:27 · follows Dan Schmidt

At 09:56 2000-09-06 -0400, Dan Schmidt wrote:

Is this a common word? It appears to be a synonym for seaweed, but I don't remember encountering it before.

It isn't exactly common, but I think I've heard it before.

It isn't just seaweed, but specifically "seaweed case ashore in masses", according to Merriam-Webster (<http://www.yourdictionary.com/cgi-bin/mw.cgi>). I think I knew about the "cast ashore" sense, but thought it was any kind of wreckage ("wrack"), not just seaweed.

Anyway, it's plausible enough for Horn to have thought of it.

SBear.

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Endymion9 — 06 Sep 2000, 18:42 · follows Peter Westlake

Dan Schmidt pondered:

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I found several commentaries of this section of ULYSSES that labeled the terms "seaspawn and seawrack" as the life cycle. With seaspawn equating to life/birth and seawrack equating to death. Hmmm.

In the same commentaries I found the following:

19th-century poet Algernon Charles Swinburne called the sea "our mighty mother." ULYSSES had Algy as a character? I've never read it, just going by the commentaries.

Also found the following under herbal remedies:

Bladderwrack has been used as a remedy for high cholesterol and hardening of the arteries, indigestion, excess weight, and insufficient thyroid, but its efficacy has not been scientifically verified Other names: Black-tang, Cutweed, Kelpware, Quercus marina, Seawrack

I doubt Wolfe was referring to the herbal uses <grin>. It's funny how since reading OBW Seawrack instantly makes me think of a gorgeous blond model-like woman, while Bladderwrack would make me think of a sea hag.

And to Robert: I agree that on p.269 of OBW the Neighbor could be referring to either The Mother or Seawrack. I thought of this as I wrote that comment, but decided one way.

Dennis/Endy

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

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matthew.malthouse — 07 Sep 2000, 08:08 · follows Endymion9

On 06/09/2000 22:27:09 Peter Westlake wrote:

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OED

sea-wrack. Forms: see wrack.

1. pl. Property cast ashore by the sea. Obs.

1548 Reg. Mag. Sig. Scot. 61/1 Terras de Terbert, cum manerio, molendino et lie sey-wrakis earundem.

2. a. collect. Seaweed, esp. any of the large coarse kinds cast up on the shore, as Fucus, Laminaria, etc. Sometimes applied spec. to Zostera marina. 1551 Turner Herbal i. K iv, Alga..is commonly called in englyshe see wrak. 1654 in N. Riding Rec. V. 161 [Indicted for unjustly taking 10 horse load of sea-wreck]. 1759 Martin Nat. Hist. II. Yorksh. 298 They gather up the Sea-wreck and lay it in Heaps. 1831 Carlyle Sart. Res. i. ii, Wherein the toughest pearl-diver may dive to his utmost depth, and return not only with sea-wreck but with true orients. 1906 F. Campbell Dearlove 29 A litter of brown sea-wrack.

b. A particular kind of seaweed.

1611 Cotgr., Spariſe, a sea-wrecke.

Ibid., Varech, a sea-wracke, or wrecke.

1658 Sir T. Browne Gard. Cyrus iii, The Spongy leaves of some Sea-wracks..are over-wrought with Net-work. 1681 Grew Mus³/₄um ii. xv. ii. 248 The Bearded Sea-Wrack. Fucus capillaris tinctorius. 1846 Lindley Veget. Kingd. 145 Zosterace³/₄.Sea wracks. 1852 Th. Ross tr. Humboldt<cq>s Trav. I. i. 33 To rank it provisionally among the sea-wracks.

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