

Humans vs. inhumans at the end of _Short Sun_

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 11 Feb 2001

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1134>

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.

Dan Rabin — 11 Feb 2001, 22:24

The protagonist spends a lot of time treating inhumans as people and trying to see their point of view, even to the point of wanting to learn about their reproductive habits. He must be the most sympathetic human the inhumans have encountered. Then Jahlee tries to kill Nettle, and Juganu leads a war party against the protagonist, who doesn't hesitate to kill them in either case (although he seems to have some regret about Jahlee).

I can't figure out whether these incidents represent the inhumans not being able to rise above their nature, or whether they are a consequence of their close imitation of humans. Perhaps they imitate humans in war as in love?

Was the protagonist just kidding himself? There are several times when he exacts a promise from a companion inhuman/u not to feed on members of his party, yet he knows that they **do** have to feed. I don't see how any rapprochement can emerge from the protagonist's treatment of the inhumans, and I don't see how the outcome for humans necessarily differs from the experience of the Neighbors.

-- Dan Rabin

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