



Robin Small .

‘Robin Small wandered wide in avoidance of all things hard to touch.’

Artist, Shaun Tan said about drawing: “While there is no set meaning in any of these drawings, there is an invitation to seek one (for myself as much as any other audience). A scene or a character seems to look back from the page and ask, ‘What do you make of this?’ Each sketch suggests its own ‘untold story.’” Here’s some recent personally relevant meaning that emerged around this particular guy....

The initial thread of Robin’s story ‘*avoidance of all things hard to touch*’, seems to elude to his trouble with intimacy. Robin’s arrows are perhaps symbolic of his painful experience of relationships and of interacting with others? Each arrow representing each jab of pain he has felt so deeply—a backpack of hurts. His heavy cloak and oversize ‘buttoning up’ an armour against further and future hurt. But I don’t think Robin has shut down or closed off.

The fact that he carries no bow with which to fire or fight back or defend himself is hopeful. His delicate nature and presence seems to suggest his openness to attempt to re-engage in ‘things hard to touch’. Allow himself to trust and to feel and to experience intimacy once more.

Robin’s softness seems to suggest that re-engaging in relationships and life, (and with his feelings), does not require him to be tougher and stronger – but to be more comfortable in his vulnerability. More accepting of a full range of feelings and emotional experiences. Wearing his backpack of pain more openly, more unashamedly, with those he can trust – or those worth taking the risk to connect with.

Original Robin Small series arrived 2013. Published in book, ‘Tales of Robin Small’. SEARCH Blog ‘Robin Small’.

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