

While promoting his latest film, a spy thriller Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy, Mark Strong was asked about Andrew Stanton's science fiction epic John Carter, a big screen adaptation based on the classic novel by Edgar Rice Burroughs. In the film, Strong plays Matai Shang, who is the leader of Holy Therns. Here is what he had to say: "He's not evil," the actor cautioned. "He's not like Lord Blackwood in 'Sherlock Holmes.' Matai Shang's race of people, they don't cause destruction -- they manage destruction. So he goes around cleaning up. If two tribes are at war, he will choose a tribe, give them the technology to beat the other one, and that solves the problem. And in doing so, there's really no war. [Director] Andrew Stanton's taken some liberties with the narrative. The Therns are more like masters of the universe now. At last, I get to play a master of the

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