

## IN A TENDER HOLD

It was as strangely quiet as the farmlands. Not a voice, not a face. It was difficult to feel. "Once I was on the high slopes," Mead said, "and a spring snowstorm came on me, and I lost my way. She came there. She came to me, not in the body, and guided me to the track. She was only twelve then." They were not far inside the Grove, and still beside the stream, when Irian stopped, turned aside, and crouched down by the enormous, hunching roots of a willow that leaned out over the water. The four mages stood on the path. That gave her pause. She stood silent. "It's the name the witch Rose of my village on Way gave me," You won't find out. It's all lies, shams. Old men playing games with words. I wouldn't play their games, so I left. Do you know what I did?" He turned, showing his teeth in a rictus of triumph. "I got a girl, a town girl, to come to my room. My cell. My little stone celibate cell. It had a window looking out on a back-street. No spells - you can't make spells with all their magic going on. But she wanted to come, and came, and I let a rope ladder out the window, and she climbed it. And we were at it when the old men came in! I showed 'em! And if I could have got you in, I'd have showed 'em again, I'd have taught them their lesson!" In the lore-book from Way, which he brought with him in a spell-sealed box whenever he traveled, transformation, you maybe know of, mistress. Even a common sorcerer may know how to work illusion. lifted at his side. Dulse had sent students on to the School, three or four of them, nice lads with a gift for this or that; but the one Nemmerle waited for had come and gone of his own will, and what they had thought of him on Roke Dulse did not know. Silence did not say. He had learned there in two or three years what some boys learned in six or seven and many never learned at all, but to him it had been mere groundwork. "Keep me?" she repeated. "You didn't seem to worry about losing me all winter. What made you come back now?" than be murdered in this hole. Still no one paid attention to them, as if a charm of protection were on them. They walked down the winding stairs, out of the tower, past the barracks, away from the mines. They walked through thin woodlands towards the foothills that hid Mount Onn from the lowlands of Samory. Crafty men used weather as a weapon, sending hail to blight an enemy's crops or a gale to sink his. neared the western plains, they stopped at a farmhouse that offered stabling for the horses, a. lies even on Roke, I'd hate those men for fooling me, fooling us all. It can't be lies. Not all of. He said only, "But not among the students." group of people under the big oak on the hilltop. When Tarry's band of harp, fife, viol, and drum. "Study with Master Hemlock?" said Diamond, his voice up half an octave. the top of his staff, a light staff of some greyish wood. The door opened as a resonant voice. But he looked up, not at Ged but at Gift, silent in the hearth corner. have it. round, strong arms, her hard, red hands. The cattleman Alder expected him to stay out in these. dark curve against the sky. prison shut. The spells were gone, but the people in the tower did not know it, working on under. authority except the King in Havnor. them? Why did they come here, if they won't work with us? "It was only a beast healer's manual," Crow admitted, when they were sailing on and he had calmed. "We all do harm by being," said the Patterner. file:///D:/Documents%20and%20Settings/harry/...0%20LeGuin%20-%20Tales%20From%20Earthsea.txt (102 of 111) [2/5/2004 12:33:32 AM]. nothing," he said. spoke in the Making." He watched the staff that stood on the shining floor. In a little while he saw it quiver very slightly, a shiver, a tremble. walks in from somewhere north, takes my business, some people would quarrel with that. A quarrel. Roke, unsealed and entered the cave, defeated the Dark Woman, and took her place. "Well, I'll try," she said. there was nothing much to say about herself. For Golden looked on the Art Magic with genuine humility as something quite beyond him -- not a. That is a stony matter," said the Namer. platform and I was on the "rast" -- there was not even anyone to ask, for the area around me was. She stood with the little oil lamp in her hand, and the light of it shone red between her fingers and golden on her face. He said her name. She gave him sleep. soft thrilling. There was no fault, only the great innocence. No need for words. They would not. Endlane said. It was somewhere else, being eaten up with worry or fear or shame. rode down several levels, I think, and, getting off on the street at the bottom, was surprised to see. benches, barrels of oil breaking loose and thundering over one another-pulled her over and held. "She took bird form. Osprey, they said. Didn't expect that from a girl so young. Gone before they knew it." Medra knew the danger of repeatedly taking any form but his own, but he was shaken and weakened by the shipwreck and the long night flight, and the grey beach led him only to the feet of sheer cliffs he could not climb. He made the spell and said the word once more, and as a sea tern flew up on quick, laboring wings to the top of the cliffs. Then, possessed by flight, he flew on over a shadowy sunrise land. Far ahead, bright in the first sunlight, he saw the curve of a high green hill. that. It's not a thing you do. You have to know how to let it do. That's all the mastery." of her hair she seemed only to endure his touch, and he stopped. When he tried to embrace her she. Havnor, they say. There they say the women of the Hand have kept the old arts. And they teach. file:///D:/Documents%20and%20Settings/harry/D...20%20LeGuin%20-%20Tales%20From%20Earthsea.txt (5 of 111) [2/5/2004 12:33:30 AM]. For a long time nobody would touch him. He had fallen down in a fit in San's doorway. He lay there. thing for him to stay there, always among wizards and mages, among boys learning wizardry, all of. file:///D:/Documents%20and%20Settings/harry/D...20%20LeGuin%20-%20Tales%20From%20Earthsea.txt (1 of 111) [2/5/2004 12:33:30 AM]. on thinking the ordinary thoughts of life, while the rest of it made preparations for terror and. "You ought to go, Di," she said. "Just to find out." inconceivable. "I'll be all right," she said. "So the Namer, and you - and the Doorkeeper?". Since the name of the person is the person, in the most literal and absolute sense, anyone who knows it has real power, power of life and death, over the person. Often a true name is never known to anybody but the giver and to the owner, who both keep it secret all their life. The power to give the true name and the imperative to keep it secret are one. True names have been betrayed, but never by the name giver. jolt, no warning, no whistle. Nothing. A distant voice resounded like the

horn of a postilion, four. We walked on. Still no houses in sight, and the wind that came rushing out of the the Master Chanter said I did harm by being here." I had the urge to tear from the wall the microphone that was inclined with such solicitude. his arm and hip and head. Then the darkness came around him, and then nothing. brave. Or brave, they said around the tavern table, in the wrong way, or the wrong place, d'you. followed her at a distance till they came to the inmost part of the Grove where all the trees were. window looking out on a back-street. No spells - you can't make spells with all their magic going. "Keep her quiet," said the young woman, and left him holding the mare's reins in this deserted place. She returned after some time lugging a heavy bucket, and set to sponging off the mare's leg. "Get the saddle off her," she said, and her tone held the unspoken, impatient, "you fool!" Ivory obeyed, half-annoyed by this crude giantess and half-intrigued. She did not put him in mind of a flowering tree at all, but she was in fact beautiful, in a large, fierce way. The mare submitted to her absolutely. When she said, "Move your foot!" the mare moved her foot. The woman wiped her down all over, put the saddle blanket back on her, and made sure she was standing in the sun. "She'll be all right," she said. "There's a gash, but if you'll wash it with warm salt water four or five times a day, it'll heal clean, I'm sorry." She said the last honestly, though grudgingly, as if she still wondered how he could have let his mare stand there to be assaulted, and she looked straight at him for the first time. Her eyes were clear orange-brown, like dark topaz or amber. They were strange eyes, right on a level with his own. spells over land and sea that compelled men to her evil will, until the first Archmage came to. "No, you weren't," she whispered. "If you had been, you would know." the west of the world here for one of your dad's parties." "I won't sail my boat across Havnor, dear love. I plan to go around it. By water." He could always make her laugh; he was the only one who could. When he was away, she was quiet-voiced and even-tempered, having learned the uselessness of impatience in the work that must be done. Sometimes she still scowled, sometimes she smiled, but she did not laugh. When she could, she went to the Grove alone, as she had always done. But in these years of the building of the House and the founding of the school, she could go there seldom, and even then she might take a couple of students to learn with her the ways through the forest and the patterns of the leaves; for she was the Patterner. was high time to go back and find out what was going on now. am Tinaral!" And his hands moved in a quick, powerful gesture, as if parting heavy curtains. She never went into the Grove without him, and it was many days before he left her alone within it. But one hot afternoon when they came to a glade among a stand of oaks, he said, "I will come back here, eh?" and walked off with his quick, silent step, lost almost at once in the dappled, shifting depths of the forest. "Beautiful, you are beautiful," he told her, breathing her grassy breath, leaning against her. Yet as Dory spoke he saw what the girl saw: a long hill going down into darkness, and across it, on the edge of twilight, a low wall of stones. And as he looked he thought he saw a woman walking along beside the wall, very thin, insubstantial, bone, shadow. But she was not the dying woman in the bed. She was Anieb. He thought he had raised his hand in a spell to stop her, but he had not raised his hand, and she came on. She stopped only when she was a couple of arm's lengths from him and a little below him still. the beast would give a shake, or toss its head a bit, or step on. And he would drop his hands and a mage's powers, unless he was as mighty as the Enemy of Morred, he couldn't hold armies and Hound had taken him, had stood and seen his people beaten senseless, had not stopped the beating. She got to work scraping down the inner wall of the house, readying it to plaster. But before the the Hand, say he is right. And as King Lebannen is one returned from death, fulfilling that. He helped her stand. He made no spell to protect or hide them. His strength had been used up. And though there was a great magery in her, which had brought her with him every step of that strange journey into the valley and tricked the wizard into saying his name, she knew no arts or spells, and had no strength left at all. protecting individuals, farms, towns, cities, and shipping, until social order was re-established. at Dulse's request that the wizard had to laugh. "I've been there." man who wore a red tunic under his grey wizard's cloak said, "Do you bring this woman into the. prearranged location? He had not thought. He had taken the shape that came soonest to him, run to the river as an otter would, swum as the otter would swim. But only in his own form could he think as a man, hide, decide, act as a man or as a wizard against the wizard who hunted him. but there's no more in that than a few drops. It's scarcely worth burning for so little. If

you. file:///D:/Documents%20and%20Settings/harry/...0%20LeGuin%20-%20Tales%20From%20Earthsea.txt (31 of 111) [2/5/2004 12:33:30

AM]. your hair, mistress! Or paper, or books. Our masters in Orrimy are seeking such things, if you had. hands as a burning, and a queasiness if it was much advanced. Approaching one steer that was

lying. file:///D:/Documents%20and%20Settings/harry/D...20%20LeGuin%20-%20Tales%20From%20Earthsea.txt (8 of 111) [2/5/2004 12:33:30 AM]. "Oh, yes, since he's cured half the herds and got paid six coppers for it, time for him to go, right enough! I'll have him here as long as I

choose, and that's the end of it." Jong, and on his breast lay the rune-ring broken. For a moment longer they held still; then the night wind blew across their naked shoulders, and shivering, they waded out, dried themselves as well as they could, struggled barefoot and wretched through the sharp-edged reeds and tangling roots, and found their way back to the lane. And there Dragonfly spoke in a ragged, raging whisper: "How could you name me that!" Maharion died a few years after Erreth-Akbe, having seen no peace established, and much unrest and. "Of all the innocence," Gift said, hissing the word. "He'll skin you." She dumped a kettleful of. mind. No one, no matter how strong or wise or great, can rightly own and use another. above, behind convex windows, scattered shadows sped by, unseen orchestras played, but here a. doesn't remember any more about it, while the other man walked away unhurt. And they say every. seen how to get it. She had given it into his hands. Her strength and her willpower were. one in a hundred, it is a latent, cultivable talent. In a very few people it is manifest without. topmost vault the pure metal ran down into a stone trough or bowl-only a drop or two a day, he. Medra stayed three years with Highdrake, and when the old mage died, the Lord of Pendor asked

Medra to take his place. Despite his ranting and scolding against dragon hunters, High-drake had been honored in his island, and his successor would have both honor and power. Perhaps tempted to think that he had come as near to Morred's Isle as he would ever come, Medra stayed a while longer on Pendor. He went out with the young lord in his ship, past the Toringates and far into the West Reach, to look for dragons. There was a great longing in his heart to see a dragon. But untimely storms, the evil weather of those years, drove their ship back to Ingat three times, and Medra refused to run her west again into those gales. He had learned a good deal about weatherworking since his days in a catboat on Havnor Bay..her eyes only. She spat into the fire, wiped her sore mouth with her hand, and stood motionless."Destroy us? Destroy this hill? The trees there?" She looked down to a grove of trees not far from.lucky as an Irian'. The masters and many tenants of the domain added its name to their own.,Hemlock was 10th to practice any of the lesser arts of magic. He did not put out a finding spell,."You can't walk all night,."I'd say," she said, her voice thin and reedy, speaking to the curer, "that if Alder's beeves stay afoot through the winter, the cattlemen will be begging you to stay. Though they may not love you,."The Old Speech, or Language of the Making, with which Segoy created the islands of Earthsea at the.everywhere. If it had not been cold weather the Marsh would have reeked of rotting flesh. None of."What all the students do. Live alone in a stone cell and learn to be wise! It might not be what you dream it to be, but that, too, you'd learn,."When I closed the gate behind me, it was all I could do to keep from running. My knees.interrupt their tete-a-tete. I must have committed some impropriety. He looked me up and down,,he said, "You work very hard,."Oh, yes, like this," and sailed back down smooth as a cloud on the south wind..file:///D:/Documents%20and%20Settings/harry/D...%20LeGuin%20-%20Tales%20From%20Earthsea.txt (7 of 111) [2/5/2004 12:33:30 AM].going beyond certain limits they had to abandon symmetry and regularity of form, and learn from.to occur in. A few miners were working at the end of a long level..all the miles to Woodedge. All he said was "She saved me," and the carter asked no questions..full of sleep and bewilderment and pain..Dulse knew better than to ask for explanation. The need to speak such a spell could not come often; the chance of his ever having to use it was very slight. He let the terrible spell sink down in his mind and be hidden and layered over with a thousand useful or beautiful or enlightening mageries and charms, all the lore and rules of Roke, all the wisdom of the books Ard had bequeathed him. Crude, monstrous, useless, it lay in the dark of his mind for sixty years, like the cornerstone of an earlier, forgotten house down in the cellar of a mansion full of lights and treasures and children..land beneath it reaching to the south. I remembered my geography lessons when I was a boy at Roke,,expression. "Emer," he said, and closed his eyes again.."I can take her to those who can,."So the school on Roke got its first student from across the sea, together with its first librarian. The Book of Names, which is kept now in the Isolate Tower, was the foundation of the knowledge and method of Naming, which is the foundation of the magic of Roke. The girl Dory, who as they said taught her teachers, became the mistress of all healing arts and the science of herbals, and established that mastery in high honor at Roke.

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