

## THE ALTERNATIVE

me as if from below, so that I floated across the void and was set down softly on a white surface, the path continued, I saw faintly gleaming hedges, wet bunches of leaves hung over a metal gate. Leave to our wings the long winds of the west, Lifting my head, I saw many others like it, hovering motionless in space in the same way, with. Before their marriage, a mage or wizard, whose name is never given except as the Enemy of Morred or the Wandlord, had paid court to Elfarran. Unforgiving and determined to possess her, in the few years of peace that followed the marriage this man developed immense power of magery. After five years he came forth and announced, in the words of the poem, "After Elfarran and Morred perished and the Isle of Solea sank beneath the sea, the Council of the. "I'm going back to where I am," Kurremkarmerruk said abruptly. "I don't like leaving myself about." So it was ordained by the first Archmage, centuries ago," said Ivory. "But ... I too have. She agreed with the others to give him a little house down by the harbor and a job helping the. That was a leap in the darkness. Which of them had said it? "If he wants a party, he'll have it," she said. Their voices were alike, being in the higher register but dark-toned, and held to an even quietness, contained, restrained. She perched on a stool beside his at the high desk. He was angry then, very angry, a hungry man whose food is snatched from his hand. He summoned the. to him that neither was his wife seeing the witch anymore. For years they'd been thick as thieves. Not much mixing of the Kargish and Archipelagan skin-color types has taken place except on Osskil, since the North Reach is isolated and thinly populated, and the Kargad people have held themselves apart from and often in enmity towards the Archipelagans for two or three millennia. completely forgot! I couldn't find him, you understand. So I'll look for a hotel. There are hotels?" left the marble palace where he sat all day, served by slaves, seeing the shadow of the sword of. of wizardry must do lest the spell operate. Dulse knew the trick of hearing them aright and. of a spell, speaking in the tongue that all the wizards and mages of Roke had learned, the. "You must find the true womb, the bellybag of the Earth, that holds the pure moonseed. Did you know that the Moon is the Earth's father? Yes, yes; and he lay with her, as is the father's right. He quickened her base clay with the true seed. But she will not give birth to the King. She is strong in her fear and willful in her vileness. She holds him back and hides him deep, fearing to give birth to her master. That is why, to give him birth, she must be burned alive." he come here, is what you have to ask. " "To cure the beasts," Gift said. The summer ended too soon that year. Rain came early; snow fell in autumn even as far south as Roke. Storm followed storm, as if the winds had risen in rage against the tampering and meddling of the crafty men. Women sat together by the fire in the lonely farmhouses; people gathered round the hearths in Thwil Town. They listened to the wind blow and the rain beat or the silence of the snow. Outside Thwil Bay the sea thundered on the reefs and on the cliffs all round the shores of the island, a sea no boat could venture out in. It was hard work out in the pastures. "Who doesn't do hard work?" Emer had asked, showing her round, strong arms, her hard, red hands. The cattleman Alder expected him to stay out in these meadows until he had touched every living beast of the great herds there. Alder had sent two cowboys along. They made a camp of sorts, with a groundcloth and a half tent. There was nothing to burn out on the marsh but small brushwood and dead reeds, and the fire was hardly enough to boil water and never enough to warm a man. The cowboys rode out and tried to round up the animals so that he could come among them in a herd, instead of going to them one by one as they scattered out foraging in the pastures of dry, frosty grass. They could not keep the cattle bunched for long, and got angry with them and with him for not moving faster. It was strange to him that they had no patience with the animals, which they treated as things, handling them as a log rafter handles logs in a river, by mere force. around the station, in the Center itself? This seemed odd to me. The wind bore a faint fragrance. The Namer, the Doorkeeper, and the Herbal followed him with her into the Grove. There was a path. woman, I did not immediately grasp, for it reached me when my back was turned, as I was. thick with worms as a dead dog on a dunghill." chanted, the ballads sung, often with a percussion accompaniment; professional chanters and. "It can do it by itself," Diamond said, and held out the fife away from his lips. His fingers danced on the stops, and the fife played a short jig. It hit several false notes and squealed on the last high note. "I haven't got it right yet," Diamond said, vexed and embarrassed. all the workers at Adapt, knew better -- that we were decidedly different. This differentness was. There they fished for whales, as they still do. That was a trade he wanted no part of. Their ships stank and their town stank. He disliked going aboard a slave ship, but the only vessel going out of Geath to the east was a galley carrying whale oil to O Port. He had heard talk of the Closed Sea, south and east of O, where there were rich isles, little known, that had no commerce with the lands of the Inmost Sea. What he sought might be there. So he went as a weatherworker on the galley, which was rowed by forty slaves. "Good-bye. . ." grim-faced old Namer. there, he sailed up the Ebavnor Straits, intending to head west along the south shores of Omer. He. Weary, evil dreams of suffocation came to him, but took no hold on him. He breathed deep. He slept. jolting between them and the drowsy carter, and the drowsy summer hills and fields slipping. black machines. I took these for cars. But when the two nearest me emerged and, before I had. ship in port, and none has come into Thwil Bay since the one that brought you, lady, and sailed. breasts, I saw that she was not nearly so thin as I had thought. But why had she ripped it off? Was. But if he lets you in, then from inside you see that the door is entirely different - it's made. of resistance he had. The illusion and the shape-change were all the tricks he had to play. If he. edge of the universe. Beyond that was only rumor and dream. The winter passed by, and the cold early spring, and with the warm late spring came a letter from. being a musician." the impression you wanted. to ask about something else. . . ?" and the other myths and hero-stories, and in the preservation of crafts and skills: among them the. When he saw it, faint and green above the misty sea, he cried out - the men in the ships heard the dragon scream - and flew on faster, leaving them to follow him to the conquest. She broke off, coughing. Her mother shot an anguished, yearning

glance at the wizard. Surely he must not feel shame. The fault was his, and mine." Nothing happened as he said the words Ard had taught him, his old witch-teacher with her bitter mouth and her long, lean arms, the words spoken awry then, spoken truly now..The Doorkeeper shook his head, agreeing..But Hopeful, sailed and steered by two young sorcerers from the Hand of Havnor, brought Medra safe down the Inmost Sea to Roke..the room; her lips moved, she was speaking, and gems as big as shields covered her ears, glittered.Erreth-Akbe's next challenger was a mage called the Firelord, whose power was so great that he lengthened a day by five hours, though he could not, as he had sworn to do, stop the sun at noon and banish darkness from the islands forever. The Firelord took dragon form to fight Erreth-Akbe, but was defeated at last, at the cost of the forests and cities of Ilien, which he set afire as he fought.. "But she was only a girl like the others, too," Mead said, and hid her face. "A good girl," she.file:///D:/Documents%20and%20Settings/harry/...0%20LeGuin%20-%20Tales%20From%20Earthsea.txt (25 of 111) [2/5/2004 12:33:30 AM].asked herself, looking at her strong bare arms, the slight, soft swell of her breasts in the.He found a carter who would carry them down to Endlane, Otter's mother and sister were living with cousins while they rebuilt their burned house as best they could. They welcomed him with disbelieving joy. Not knowing Hound's connection with the warlord and his wizard, they treated him as one of themselves, the good man who had found poor Otter half dead in the forest and brought him home. A wise man, said Otter's mother Rose, surely a wise man. Nothing was too good for such a man..dominant will-the will of a mage strong enough to hold even strong wizards in his service. There."What Master?".a.b.e-book v3.0 / Notes at EOF.gleaned from his sailors' reports and the marvelous ancient charts kept in the palace. He studied.Iria, and she came striding down to meet him. "I'm sorry, Ivory," she said, looking up at him with.All we know of ancient times in Earthsea is to be found in poems and songs, passed down orally for.lands like Havnor or worse, sunk in warfare, raids, and piracy, the fields full of weeds, the."We'll have to see," said Alder, the next day, "if my beasts are cured. If they make it through the winter, see, we'll know your cures all took, that they're sound, like. Not that I doubt it, but fair's fair, right? You wouldn't ask me to pay you what I have in mind to pay you, would you now, if the cure didn't take and the beasts died after all. Avert the chance! But I wouldn't ask you to wait all that time unpaid, neither. So here's an advance, like, on what's to come, and all's square between us for now, right?"..and had no strength left at all..She tried to sit up again, looking up, but the shaking and shuddering seized her and wracked her. She began to gasp for breath. In the red light that shone now from the crest of the mountain and all the eastern sky he saw the foam and spittle run scarlet from her mouth. Sometimes she clutched at him, but she did not speak again. She fought her death, fought to breathe, while the red light faded and then darkened into grey as clouds swept again across the mountain and hid the rising sun. It was broad day and raining when her last hard breath was not followed by another..Deeds, lays, songs, and popular ballads are still composed as oral performances, mostly by professional singers. New works of any general interest are soon written down as broadsheets or put in compilations..Diamond had run away..BUT OF COURSE he went down to Havnor South Port, in one of his father's carts driven by one of his father's carters, along with Master Hemlock. As a rule, people do what wizards advise them to do. And it is no small honor to be invited by a wizard to be his student or apprentice. Hemlock, who had won his staff on Roke, was used to having boys come to him begging to be tested and, if they had the gift for it, taught. He was a little curious about this boy whose cheerful good manners hid some reluctance or self-doubt. It was the father's idea, not the boy's, that he was gifted. That was unusual, though perhaps not so unusual among the wealthy as among common folk. At any rate he came with a very good prenticing fee paid beforehand in gold and ivory. If he had the makings of a wizard Hemlock would train him, and if he had, as Hemlock suspected, a mere childish flair, then he'd be sent home with what remained of his fee. Hemlock was an honest, upright, humorless, scholarly wizard with little interest in feelings or ideas. His gift was for names. "The art begins and ends in naming," he said, which indeed is true, although there may be a good deal between the beginning and the end.."Get back, you black-hearted bitch!" she yelled. "Home, you crawling traitor!" And the dogs fell.but Irioth spoke.."I didn't want to waste your time.".Word of Unbinding, which is spoken only once..Otter walked on a mile, brooding; then circled back, leading Licky to a hillock not far from the..took time off for a breather and a swig, a new group hopped up onto the dance floor. "Hey, there's.guess Otak did. But he did no harm to the man at all, but fell down in a swoon himself. And now he."But it was you who said. . ."diplomas under your belt, plus four years of training, twelve years in all. In other words -- women.the same root comes the noun esege, "creative force, breath, poetry.".And they study there just to get richer. Or to get power.".He groaned and scoured his scalp with his knuckles. He was sitting on the dirt in their old play-place, a kind of bower deep in the willows, where they could hear the stream running over the stones nearby and the clang-clang of the smithy further off. The girl sat down facing him.."Sorry," I muttered and began to pace. Behind the glass a park stretched out in the.destroying sweetness, sinking into an annihilating embrace, dreams in which she was something."How could he not want to?". "No. Theater, I know what that was -- that was long ago. I know: they had actual people.preventing himself and for having to be prevented..The winter passed by, and the cold early spring, and with the warm late spring came a letter from his mother, brought by a carter. Diamond read it and took it to Master Hemlock, saying, "My mother wonders if I might spend a month at home this summer.".We walked on. Still no houses in sight, and the wind that came rushing out of the."Because you don't understand a thing. I don't know how to tell you. It's nothing, you.As he left the battlefield it began to rain, and he saw his enemy's true name written in raindrops.He drew back, staring, and made a fierce motion of his hand that brushed away the stream in a.first. I blinked. The hall, brightly lit, was practically empty; she walked to the next door. When I.They keep complex accounts and records in weavings of different colors and weights of yarn, and.Gelluk was standing still, but his shaking hands were clenched, his whole tall body twitching and trembling, like a hound that wants to chase but cannot find the scent. He was at a loss. There was the hillside with its grass and bushes in the

last of the sunlight, but there was no entrance. Grass growing out of gravelly dirt; the seamless earth.. "But the spirit of rivalry worked in the boy as he grew to be a man. It's a strong spirit on Roke: Ivory nodded gravely. "But the Archmage lost all his power in the land of death. Maybe all magery." "No need," said the man like a falcon. "I will." And he said, "Irioth." .grossly ignorant. It is taught in winter and spring, and spoken and sung entire every year at the. that he thought about his pupil, and not until he had eaten supper alone that he admitted that. So they talked, that long winter, and others talked with them. Slowly their talk turned from vision to intention, from longing to planning. Veil was always cautious, warning of dangers. White-haired Dune was so eager that Ember said he wanted to start teaching sorcery to every child in Thwil. Once Ember had come to believe that Roke's freedom lay in offering others freedom, she set her whole mind on how the women of the Hand might grow strong again. But her mind, formed by her long solitudes among the trees, always sought form and clarity, and she said, "How can we teach our art when we don't know what it is?" .were gossamer to him, transparent. Nothing blurred his eyes or challenged his will as he flew over. The history of the Fourteen Kings of Havnor (actually six kings and eight queens, ~150-400) is told in the Havnorian Lay. Tracing descent both through the male and the female lines, and intermarrying with various noble houses of the Archipelago, the royal house embraced five principalities: the House of Enlad, the oldest, tracing direct descent from Morred and Serriadh; the Houses of Shelieth, Ea, and Havnor; and lastly the House of Ilien. Prince Gemal Seaborn of Ilien was the first of his house to take the throne in Havnor. His granddaughter was Queen Heru; her son, Maharion (reigned 430-452), was the last king before the Dark Time.. "But you can't hide true power," Medra said. "Not for long. It dies in hiding, unshared." .he looked at his son. Slowly the mixture of anger, disappointment, confusion, and respect on his. still clear enough under the green grasses of summer. Morred and Elfarran married, and the poem describes their reign as a brief golden age, the. it too. What you are to do I don't know, nor do you. That's to find. But there's no such power as. Early never disregarded any triviality Hound mentioned, because so many of them had proved not to be trivial. He disliked the old man for that, and because he was unshakable. He never praised Hound, and used him as seldom as possible, but Hound was too useful not to use.. the earth, reminding the wizards and mages that their power was not theirs, but lent to them.. The staff swayed, was still, shivered again.. "To see you!" .Rose was very dark-skinned, with a cloud of crinkled hair, a thin mouth, an intent, serious face.. He stood silent a minute, and then said, "In Karego-At, when I was a barbarian, I was Azver. In Hardic, that is a banner of war." . "I am hungry now," said the mage. He took a hardboiled egg from the basket, cracked, shelled, and ate it.. on Pendor. He went out with the young lord in his ship, past the Toringates and far into the West. wooden clogs; and old Coney in the vineyards with his razor-edge knife, showing her how to prune. "Straining," Heleth said, his hand still absently, gently patting the dirt as one might pat a scared cow. "Quite soon now, I think. Can you hold the Gates open, my dear?" . prison." . "But I came far. Miles can be years. I am Kargish, from Karego. You know?" . "Irian of Way," the Summoner said in his deep, clear voice, "that there may be peace and order, . touch it.. we would say Semen." He smiled again and patted Otter's hand. "For he is the seed and fructifier.. at Essary and swamped the wharfs at Gont Port.. that bush into the seeming of a tree," he said, and promptly Otter did so. Illusion came so easy. am Tinaral!" And his hands moved in a quick, powerful gesture, as if parting heavy curtains.. "You could go to Roke," he said, his eyes bright with excitement, mischief, daring. Meeting her. her eyes only. She spat into the fire, wiped her sore mouth with her hand, and stood motionless. bully and humiliate them, spite and thwart them, hating the death they saw in them. He had seen. the spirit of one long dead. To see the beauty of Elfarran in the orchards of Solea, as Morred saw. ethical use and teaching of magic, was established by men and women on Roke Island about a hundred. stones nearby and the clang-clang of the smithy further off. The girl sat down facing him.. "Go on," the witch murmured.. the background, making do with slaves and prentices.. Great House, I feel that nothing can be done but what has been done. That nothing will change.. long, and on his breast lay the rune-ring broken.. right time (usually early adolescence) and in the right place (a spring, pool, or running stream).. remained motionless for a few seconds, then slowly went along the shore, following its uneven

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