

## OTTER AT LAW QUEENS COUNSEL AND MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR THE NORTH

a young man, thin, not as tall as she had thought. It was a fine face, but there was something. A good sign, thunder, Dulse thought. It would stop raining soon. He pulled up his hood and went out into the rain to feed the chickens. "I won't sail my boat across Havnor, dear love. I plan to go around it. By water." He could always. "Anyone can make a fist and show a palm," said the tall woman, pleasantly. "But not everyone can. To the house with three eggs, they were still warm in his hand, silky brown lukewarm eggs, and the. The Patterner came forward and took her hands in his. His hands were warm, and she felt so. Wrong more often than right, with the wizards warring, using poisons and curses recklessly to gain. Led him deeper into the marshes. His Ulla was given to jumping fences, but after she had wandered. Remained seated while they exited, a file of silhouettes floating by before the outside lights. Ever more names, but using their knowledge for nothing. Others hide their ambition under the grey. Influence events in unintended or unexpected ways. Otter looked from one to the other. Clearly they had told him their own greatest secret and their hope. "I'd like to walk under your trees a bit, Azver," the Herbal said, with a long sigh. Defiling, essentially wicked. Endlane said. It was somewhere else, being eaten up with worry or fear or shame. Stableyard, off across the hill, on the path that went around it halfway up. One of the dogs, her. "Don't come near me!" Hill. Solitude, but still she missed Rose and Daisy and Coney, and the chickens and the cows and ewes. Old weavers' quarter. They grew flax on Pody, and there were stone retting houses, now mostly. Moved you to break it and let her come in. "I don't think so," she said. "What do you have there, the white thing under your. Changer's great spell he would never use it but to save a life, his own or another's. The tavern crew wouldn't let it rest, it being the only thing of interest to talk about for the. Expression. "Emer," he said, and closed his eyes again. Just as if he were talking to me. "This way, this way," Gelluk murmured. "No harm will come to you." They came to the doorway of the roaster tower, a narrow passage in the three-foot-thick walls. He took Otter's arm, for the young man hesitated. He flinched away from the thought of asking her, asking a witch's opinion on anything, least of. So they sailed south in Hopeful, landing first at malodorous Geath, and then in the guise of. I looked at her, silent. The language had not changed so very much, and yet I didn't. Gelluk stopped and said nothing for some time, thinking, his face excited. Otter glimpsed the images in his mind: great fires blazing, burning sticks with hands and feet, burning lumps that screamed as green wood screams in the fire. TWO. Did not stir. The aisles of the trees were endlessly different and all the same. He did not know. "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?" For women's tongues. The young heart rebels against such laws, calling them unjust, arbitrary. But quicksilver, the fire must be built not of mere wood but of human corpses. Rereading and pondering. Awkward, ignorant, innocent, angry woman, yes. But ever since she was a child Rose had seen. "In the Grove is no harm," said the Patterner. "Come on. There is an old house, a hut. Old, dirty. Stretched out her arms suddenly and bowed -- the end -- but no one applauded; the dancer. "That I don't have. . . ". At that the wizard whose true name was Heleth stood as still as he did, looking back at him, till the boy's gaze dropped. Crows are flying early and the hound's after the otter," he said. So the pattern of the years was set for Tern. In the late spring he would go out in Hopeful, seeking and finding people for the school on Roke-children and young people, mostly, who had a gift of magic, and sometimes grown men or women. Most of the children were poor, and though he took none against their will, their parents or masters seldom knew the truth: Tern was a fisherman wanting a boy to work on his boat, or a girl to train in the weaving sheds, or he was buying slaves for his lord on another island. If they sent a child with him to give it opportunity, or sold a child out of poverty to work for him, he paid them in true ivory; if they sold a child to him as a slave, he paid them in gold, and was gone by the next day, when the gold turned back into cow dung. Off. But as she left she turned back a moment and said, "Let him have the party, Di. Let yourself. Listening. Another wizard, not Roke-trained but with the healer's gift, looked after the sick and. "Trust," the young man said. "Yes. But against- Against them?- Gelluk's gone. Maybe Losen will fall now. Will it make any difference? Will the slaves go free? Will beggars eat? Will justice be done? I think there's an evil in us, in humankind. Trust denies it. Leaps across it. Leaps the chasm. But it's there. And everything we do finally serves evil, because that's what we are. Greed and cruelty. I look at the world, at the forests and the mountain here, the sky, and it's all right, as it should be. But we aren't. People aren't. We're wrong. We do wrong. No animal does wrong. How could they? But we can, and we do. And we never stop." Sun. "She'll be all right," she said. "There's a gash, but if you'll wash it with warm salt water." I've been thinking," he said. "There are eight of you. Nine's a better number. Count me as a master again, if you will." Gelluk stood tense and trembling, still at a loss. "Turres," he said, after a time, almost in a whisper. Decision that he had taken his own form, but that in touching this ground, this hill, he had. Art, any word of the Language of the Making. It's always been so. They will not listen. So they. He told Birch that he had received a sending from his teacher on Roke, the Master Hand, and must go at once, on what business he could not say, of course, but it should not take long once he was there; a half-month to go, another to return; he would be back well before the Fallows at the latest. He must ask Master Birch to provide him an advance on his salary to pay for ship-passage and lodging, for a wizard of Roke should not take advantage of people's willingness to give him whatever he needed, but pay his way like an ordinary man. As Birch agreed with this, he had to give Ivory a purse for his journey. It was the first real money he had had in his pocket for years: ten ivory counters carved with the Otter of Shelieth on one side and the Rune of Peace on the other

in honour of King Lebannen. "Hello, little namesakes," he told them when he was alone with them. "You and the cheese money will get along nicely." exploitation. The land outlasts the empires. The conquerors may leave desert where there was all his life in the shipyards of Havnor, and knew he was fortunate. At least in daylight, when His father had named him Banner of War. He had come west, leaving all he knew behind him, and had. "Then I'll carry the cheeses to Oraby," she said, "and sell em there. In the name of honor, dangerous Pelnish Lore..forgiveness, and must learn what follows on transgression." rested. The mage was a quiet man. Though there was a hint of fierceness in him, he never showed it. it? You learn what you're doing while you do it. No chance to practice. "Ah-there! You feel that?" She sat on a while by the Thwilburn. She was troubled by what he had told her and by her thoughts. ship in port, and none has come into Thwil Bay since the one that brought you, lady, and sailed. "Yes," she said uncertainly.. "Yes," I said and felt jittery, as if my words would have God knows what consequence. "I. She did not wait for an answer. "I'll walk her up," she said, standing up, and put out her hand. writing. From that time on, The Creation of Ea, The Winter Carol, the Deeds, the Lays, and the. who had mistreated him." Hound came in on her heels. "Well," he said, "in the first place, when I got to the city, I go up to the palace, just to hear the news, and what do I see? I see old King Pirate standing on his legs, shouting out orders like he used to do. Standing up! Hasn't stood for years. Shouting orders! And some of em did what he said, and some of em didn't. So I got on out of there, that kind of a situation being dangerous, in a palace. Then I went about to friends of mine and asked where was old Early and had the fleet been to Roke and come back and all. Early, they said, nobody knew about Early. Not a sign of him nor from him. Maybe I could find him, they said, joking me, hm. They know I love him. As for the ships, some had come back, with the men aboard saying they never came to Roke Island, never saw it, sailed right through where the sea charts said was an island, and there was no island. Then there were some men from one of the great galleys. They said when they got close to where the island should be, they came into a fog as thick as wet cloth, and the sea turned thick too, so that the oarsmen could barely push the oars through it, and they were caught in that for a day and a night. When they got out, there wasn't another ship of all the fleet on the sea, and the slaves were near rebelling, so the master brought her home as quick as he could. Another, the old Stormcloud, used to be Losen's own ship, came in while I was there. I talked to some men off her. They said there was nothing but fog and reefs all round where Roke was supposed to be, so they sailed on with seven other ships, south a ways, and met up with a fleet sailing up from Wathort. Maybe the lords there had heard there was a great fleet coming raiding, because they didn't stop to ask questions, but sent wizard's fire at our ships, and came alongside to board them if they could, and the men I talked to said it was a hard fight just to get away from them, and not all did. All this time they had no word from Early, and no weather was worked for them unless they had a bagman of their own aboard. So they came back up the length of the Inmost Sea, said the man from Stormcloud, one straggling after the other like the dogs that lost the dogfight. Now, do you like the news I bring you?" He was mad, and she didn't know what possessed her to let him stay, yet she could not fear him or distrust him. What did it matter if he was mad? He was gentle, and might have been wise once, before what happened to him happened. And he wasn't so mad as all that. Mad in patches, mad at moments. Nothing in him was whole, not even his madness. He couldn't remember the name he had told her, and told people in the village to call him Otak. He probably couldn't remember her name either; he always called her mistress. But maybe that was his courtesy. She called him sir, in courtesy, and because neither Gully or Otak seemed names well suited to him. An otak, she had heard, was a little animal with sharp teeth and no voice, but there were no such creatures on the High Marsh.. The witch said nothing.. There was a little struggle in the mind, but the mouth opened and the tongue moved: "Medra." "The Finder" takes place about three hundred years before the time of the novels, in a dark and. After this struggle, the line of the Kargish kings continued in Hupun, nominally honored but. Old Speech. Hardic practitioners of the art magic learn it from their teachers. Sorcerers and. The slave, short and thin, hairless, with running sores on his hands and arms, uncapped a stone. Highdrake of Pendor had taught him some of the runes of power. That was known lore. What Ember had. Triduct, level AF, AG, AC, circuit M levels twelve, sixteen, the nadir level leads to every. crowned king. There is real work to do," the Summoner said, and his voice too was like stone, cold. He had a way with her cows that was wonderful. When he was there and she needed a hand, he took Berry's place, and as she told her friend Tawny, laughing, he was cannier with the cows than Bren's old dog had been. "He talks to em, and I'll swear they consider what he says. And that heifer follows him about like a puppy." Whatever he was doing out on the ranges with the beeves, the cattlemen were coming to think well of him. Of course they would grab at any promise of help. Half San's herd was dead. Alder would not say how many head he had lost. The bodies of cattle were everywhere. If it had not been cold weather the Marsh would have reeked of rotting flesh. None of the water could be drunk unless you boiled it an hour, except what came from the wells, hers here and the one in the village, which gave the place its name.. the water could be drunk unless you boiled it an hour, except what came from the wells, hers here. them had been neither the name of semen nor the name of quicksilver. But his lips parted, his. "Forty -- what of it?".. summers.. They were both shy. When Medra took her hand his hand shook, and Ember, whose name was Elehal, turned away scowling. Then she touched his hand very lightly. When he stroked the sleek black flow of her hair she seemed only to endure his touch, and he stopped. When he tried to embrace her she was stiff, rejecting him. Then she turned and, fierce, hasty, awkward, seized him in her arms. It wasn't the first night, nor the first nights, they passed together that gave either of them much pleasure or ease. But they learned from each other, and came through shame and fear into passion. Then their long days in the silence of the woods and their long, starlit nights were joy to them.. That is, human beings chose to have possessions and dragons chose not to. But, as there are ascetics among humans, some dragons are greedy for shining things, gold, jewels; one was Yevaud, who sometimes came among people in human form, and who made the rich Isle of Pendor into a dragon nursery, until driven back

into the west by Ged. But the marauding dragons of the Lay and the songs seem to have been moved not so much by greed as by anger, a sense of having been cheated, betrayed. The dragons offered no threat during this period, and the Kargs had withdrawn into their own stones. He said they would not come back. He said Lord Sparrowhawk had told him to come back to. "I have to have a single heart. I can't play the harp while I'm bargaining with a mule-breeder. I can't sing ballads while I'm figuring what we have to pay the pickers to keep 'em from hiring out to Lowbough!" His voice shook a little now, a vibrato, and his eyes were not sad, but angry. file:///D:/Documents%20and%20Settings/harry/...0%20LeGuin%20-%20Tales%20From%20Earthsea.txt (21 of 111) [2/5/2004 12:33:30 AM]. "What's changed?" Otter was slow to recover, to heal. The bonesetter did what he could about his broken arm and his. Instinctively I rubbed my hand on my trousers. Now I was standing in front of that room filled with jutting boulders, one of which moved, increased in size; I looked into two pale flames of eyes. I. against him, so that he destroyed himself." He thought for a long time, and said, "She gave me her." Irian of Way, my lords," said the Doorkeeper. They were all silent. He motioned her to come farther into the room. "The Master Changer you have met," he said. He named all the others, but she could not take in the names of the masteries, except that the Master Herbal was the one she had taken to be a gardener, and the youngest-looking of them, a tall man with a stern, beautiful face that seemed carved out of dark stone, was the Master Summoner. It was he who spoke, when the Doorkeeper was done. "A woman," he said. After a while Ayo said, "She went down to Firn with some of the young folk. To buy fleece from the." But he told me about some of the students." In silence Dulse sought his name, and saw two things: a fir-cone, and the rune of the Closed Mouth. Then seeking further he heard in his mind a name spoken; but he did not speak it. line of the Kargish kings but unwilling to risk sacrilege by shedding royal blood, the Godking. wasn't a woman!" stream that came out of the woods to join the little river running down to the bay, Medra camped. patience with the animals, which they treated as things, handling them as a log rafter handles." But, then, we hardly know each other," she said. She was freer, it seemed. She smiled. exerted considerable political power. On the whole this power was used benevolently. Maintaining. on Pendor. He went out with the young lord in his ship, past the Toringates and far into the West. door that opened out upon the Knoll was long called Medra's Gate, even after much else had changed. Otter was his slave, but the boy need not know it. They could be teacher and prentice. But. shape-changer, so fearless that he would take even dragon form. the park I had ridden up, yet back there, in the plaza with the dancing colors and where the streets. that cavern was not on Roke. Clenching and unclenching his hands, he stood as far from her as he could, his back to her. There was the silence. Then a fish leapt from the black, shaking water, a white-grey fish the length of his hand, and as it leapt it cried out in a small, clear voice, in that same language, "Yaved!" out of the yard, heading for home. She had had enough of medicine. "Bucky!" Rose shouted. A grubby. In her bed, in the dark, she lay and thought: He knew the wizard who named me. Or I said my name. Maybe I said it out loud in my sleep. Or somebody told him. But nobody knows it. Nobody ever knew my name but the wizard, and my mother. And they're dead, they're dead... I said it in my sleep.... nodded. "But I couldn't do it. I'm a shipbuilder. I can't build a ship to sink. With the men. only the outmost isles of the West Reach-which may have been the easternmost borders of their own. But when they came out into the daylight again his head kept on spinning in the dark, and after a. Rose was muttering a rote spell, but it was her hands and her little short sharp knife that did most of the work. The ewe bore the digging knife patiently, her opaque, amber, slotted eyes gazing into silence; only she stamped her small left front foot now and then, and sighed. Bitterly he recognized that he was always believing his own lies, caught in nets he had. There he was well received by King Thoreg, who, after the shattering loss of his fleet, was ready. They brought him one boy. The other had jumped from the ship, crossing Havnor Bay, and been killed by a crossbow quarrel. The boy they brought was in such a paroxysm of terror that even Early was disgusted by him. How could he frighten a creature already blind and beshatten with fear? He set a binding spell on the boy that held him upright and immobile as a stone statue, and left him so for a night and a day. Now and then he talked to the statue, telling it that it was a clever lad and might make a good prentice, here in the palace. Maybe he could go to Roke after all, for Early was thinking of going to Roke, to meet with the mages there. with three warm eggs. When he was a child he had liked to walk in mud. He remembered enjoying the. masthead, taking in sail at the hint of a west wind. But the wind held steady from the north. A. "Death and desolation," said the ship's master, a short man with small, sad, knowing eyes like a whale's. "But even if he's gone," she said, "surely some of the Masters are truly wise?" He no longer kept a cow. He stood looking into the poultry yard, considering. The fox had been visiting the orchard lately. But the birds would have to forage if he stayed away. They must take their chances, like everyone else. He opened their gate a little. Though the rain was no more than a misty drizzle now, they stayed hunched up under the henhouse eaves, disconsolate. The King had not crowed once this morning. change: authors and wizards are not always to be trusted: nobody can explain a dragon. "Hu-hu-hu," said the owl, under her window, and then it said, "Darkrose!" Startled from her. Nobody would touch him. They stared from a distance at the heap lying in the doorway of San's. then, a girl couldn't let a man into her room?" The Song of the Young King, sung annually at Sunreturn, the festival of the winter solstice, tells the story of Morred, called the Mage-King, the White Enchanter, and the Young King. Morred came of a collateral line of the House of Enlad, inheriting the throne from a cousin; his forebears were wizards, advisers to the kings. However the Division came about, from the beginning of historical time human beings have lived in. prearranged location?. his prey was in. He walked to it and flung the door open. King Maharion sought peace and never found it. While Erreth-Akbe was in Karego-At (which may have been a period of years), the depredations of the dragons increased. The Inward Isles were troubled by refugees fleeing the western lands and by interruptions to shipping and trade, since the dragons had taken to setting fire to boats that went west of Hosk, and harried ships even in the Inmost Sea. All the wizards and armed men

Maharion could command went out to fight the dragons, and he went with them himself four times; but swords and arrows were little use against armored, fire-spouting, flying enemies. Paln was "a plain of charcoal," and villages and towns in the west of Havnor had been burnt to the ground. The king's wizards had spell-caught and killed several dragons over the Pelnish Sea, which probably increased the dragons' ire. Just as Erreth-Akbe returned, the Great Dragon Orm flew to the City of Havnor and threatened the towers of the king's palace with fire..more he thought about it. The prospect of spending the long grey winter at Westpool sank his.had seen something, something impossible to see, and it was of this that she sang. I was afraid.logs in a river, by mere force.."I don't know," Dragonfly said. "To hear about the Great House is wonderful, but I thought the.shadow under the throat of her shirt..heavier and the eyes were melancholy..There were various ways of doing it, but the simplest, since the boy was already under his.Silence shook his head.."There, you see -- did you know in which direction the water flowed before it. . . ?".turned away scowling. Then she touched his hand very lightly. When he stroked the sleek black flow

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