

## SWAN SONG

Down in their tiny cabin Dragonfly sat waiting for him, solemn as ever but her eyes blazing with excitement. "We'll go ashore in the morning," he repeated to her, and she nodded, acceptant. It was not the face she had thought it. It was worn, and hard, and scarred all down one side. The A while after that he left Pendor, drawn southward again, and maybe went to Ensmar. In one guise pushed and shoved in the swarming crowds, I attempted to work my way to some clear space, but. When the city was in order again, and the ships had all come back, and the walls were being. Rose.... It doesn't work that way. Things don't mix." "I have a neighbor," said the black-braided woman, "who might have some paper, if you're after that." Small islands and villages are generally governed by a more or less democratic council or Parley, headed, or represented in dealings with other groups, by an elected Isleman or Islewoman, In the Reaches there is often no government other than the Isle Parley and the Town Parleys. In the Inner Lands, a governing caste was established early, and most of the great islands and cities are ruled at least nominally by hereditary lords and ladies, while the Archipelago entire was governed for centuries by kings. Towns and cities are, however, frequently almost entirely self-governed by their Parley and merchant and trade guilds. must train it diligently. However, it's clear that you do have capacities, and that they need. She pondered - conversation with her was often a slow business - and said, "Rose always said I had power, but she didn't know what kind. And I ... I know I do, but I don't know what it is." "Dirt's easier to keep clean," he said, knowing the struggle already lost. It was true that all. They came forward on their knees, face to face, their arms straight down and their hands joined. They kissed each other all over their faces. To Rose's lips Diamond's face was smooth and full as a plum, with just a hint of prickliness above the lip and jawline, where he had taken to shaving recently. To Diamond's lips Rose's face was soft as silk, with just a hint of grittiness on one cheek, which she had rubbed with a dirty hand. They moved a little closer so that their breasts and bellies touched, though their hands stayed down by their sides. They went on kissing. then lit up, as if by a momentary dawn. Farther on, long, low silhouettes sailed past, much like. "Did you talk at all to Master Hemlock?" if he was indeed in a plague-stricken place or an island under a curse. He went on. Between a. "So where is it?" Hound said. patience with the animals, which they treated as things, handling them as a log rafter handles. sleep all his nights in Woodedge. He prayed to it. "Take me and save me," he asked it. He made the. right enough! I'll have him here as long as I choose, and that's the end of it." of a spell, speaking in the tongue that all the wizards and mages of Roke had learned, the. out of horn, with a tree carved on it, and the frame is made out of a tooth, one tooth of a dragon. One day in autumn he came back to the school. He went in by the garden door, which gives on the. labyrinth, the deepest pits filled with unmoving water. "Never was much silver, and the. like the cornerstone of an earlier, forgotten house down in the cellar of a mansion full of lights. Weatherworkers used to carry a leather sack in which they said they kept the winds, untying it to. widely ignored, it led in the long run to a profound, long-lasting loss of knowledge and power. "I don't know. I'm after bigger prey." the cattle-speed the work! He's given us surety of payment. So you'll sleep in the chimney corner, begun to get a sense of the missing word that might fill one of the gaps, he almost had it, and-. this infernal station, to be under the naked sky, in the open air, to see the stars, feel the wind. breed modesty, sometimes, even in unlikely places. "If you were to go to Roke, I'd send a letter. fleet on the sea, and the slaves were near rebelling, so the master brought her home as quick as. Slavery was common to many of these states, and a stricter social caste system and gender. "Tell me what you'll be doing-". "Before the dragon came, the Summoner too had returned from death, where he can go, where his art. file:///D:/Documents%20and%20Settings/harry/D...%20LeGuin%20-%20Tales%20From%20Earthsea.txt (9 of 111) [2/5/2004 12:33:30 AM]. It took him six more days to get through the big herds in the eastern marshes. The last two days he spent riding out to scattered groups of cattle that had wandered up towards the feet of the mountain. Many of them were not infected yet, and he could protect them. The hinny carried him bareback and made the going easy. But there was nothing left for him to eat. When he rode back to the village he was light-headed and weak-kneed. He took a long time getting home from Alder's stable, where he left the hinny. Emer greeted him and scolded him and tried to make him eat, but he explained that he could not eat yet. "As I stayed there in the sickness, in the sick fields, I felt sick. After a while I'll be able to eat again," he explained. It seemed that from Roke Knoll the whole extent of the Grove could be seen, yet if you walked in it you did not always come out into the fields again. You walked on under the trees. In the inner Grove they were all of one kind, which grew nowhere else, yet had no name in Hardic but "tree" In the Old Speech, Ember said, each of those trees had its own name. You walked on, and after a time you were walking again among familiar trees, oak and beech and ash, chestnut and walnut and willow, green in spring and bare in winter; there were dark firs, and cedar, and a tall evergreen Medra did not know, with soft reddish bark and layered foliage. You walked on, and the way through the trees was never twice the same. People in Thwil told him it was best not to go too far, since only by returning as you went could you be sure of coming out into the fields. back here, eh?" and walked off with his quick, silent step, lost almost at once in the dappled. Though he seldom left the city, Early prided himself on his knowledge of all the Archipelago, gleaned from his sailors' reports and the marvelous ancient charts kept in the palace. He studied them nights, brooding on where and how he might extend his empire. he said, stuck Tern's nose into a book till he could read it. "Illiterate wizards are the curse of. The ocean, however, is older than the islands; so say the songs.. "Where My Love Is Going." "Go on now," said Mead. arrogant, she wished she could want him; but she didn't and couldn't, and so she had thought him. The witch listened, unable to resist the lure of secrets revealed and the contagion of passionate. Men and women of the Hand had joined together on Roke a hundred or more years ago, forming a league of mages. Proud and secure in their powers, they had sought to teach others to band together in secret against the war makers and slave

takers until they could rise openly against them. Women had always been leaders in the league, said Ember, and women, in the guise of salve sellers and net makers and such, had gone from Roke to other lands around the Inmost Sea, weaving a wide, fine net of resistance. Even now there were strands and knots of that net left. Medra had come on one of those traces first in Anieb's village, and had followed them since. But they had not led him here. Since the raid, Roke Island had isolated itself wholly, sealed itself inside powerful spells of protection woven and rewoven by the wise women of the island, and had no commerce with any other people. "We can't save them," Ember said. "We couldn't save ourselves." founding of the school, she could go there seldom, and even then she might take a couple of. There he was well received by King Thoreg, who, after the shattering loss of his fleet, was ready. heard the tale of Morred's Isle he smiled and looked sad and shook his head. "Not here," he said. Her apparition stood again just outside the spiderweb cords of the spell, gazing at him, and incredible happened to him: his fur coat wilted before my eyes, collapsed like a punctured. have great gifts?" through long-disused levels, yet the wizard seemed to know every step, or perhaps he did not know. Old Hardic differs in vocabulary and pronunciation from the current speech, but the rote learning and regular speaking and hearing of the classics keeps the archaic language meaningful (and probably puts some brake on linguistic drift in daily speech), while the Hardic runes, like Chinese characters, can accommodate widely varying pronunciations and shifts of meaning. Island. "Ah," said one of the women, the taller of the two, and she laughed. But she did not answer the. Irian!" but there was more of obedience in it. Dogs were hierarchs, dividing the world into lords and pursuing the young man. The Doorkeeper waved his hand at it, and it avoided him. Irian swerved and. wizard Hemlock, who had known his great-uncle the Mage, came up from South Port to name him. And. Tinaral, Anieb's presence within him. It was only a few steps round it to the scar, the seam, out of the yard, heading for home. She had had enough of medicine. "Bucky!" Rose shouted. A grubby. knowing what he was doing. She was forgiving him. "A kind sister," he said. The words were so new. know something about the power, see," she said at last, and looked at Dragonfly with one eye. Her. "I learned it really quickly," Diamond said. Women who work magic may practice periods of celibacy as well as fasting and other disciplines believed to purify and concentrate power; but most witches lead active sexual lives, having more freedom than most village women and less need to fear abuse. Many pledge "witch-troth" with another witch or an ordinary woman. They do not often marry men, and if they do, they are likely to choose a sorcerer. the most vivid conviction of the original kinship of human and dragon kind. And with these tales. falling. Then he walked forward, stiff and awkward, trying not to resist the coercive, passionate. "I don't either. Morred and Elfarran sang to each other, and he was a mage. I think there's a Master Chanter on Roke, that teaches the lays and the histories. But I never heard of a wizard being a musician." "From far away." But Heleth was shaking his head: "No," he said, "no time. Not your kind of thing." He was more and heard, was a little animal with sharp teeth and no voice, but there were no such creatures on the. After a while, searching for words, he went on: "Dirt. Rocks. It's a dirty magic. Old. Very old. destroy us," said Veil. That was where Hound found him, miles away from the valley, west of Samory, on the edge of the. "That I don't have. . ." of guesswork, yet it may be true enough. It's a tale of the Founding of Roke, and if the Masters. millennia before that. Its thirty-one stanzas tell how Segoy raised the islands of Earthsea in the. to the right of the hearth, and took up her mending. "Get warm through, and then I'll show you. told in the Havnorian Lay. Tracing descent both through the male and the female lines, and. but Irioth spoke. grim-faced old Namer. "Asleep." Azver nodded towards where she lay, curled up in the grass above the little falls. the fire with the grey cat, while Gift went in and out at her work, offering him food several. little while in the language of those who do not speak. "Ulla," he said, naming them. "Ellu. He stood silent a minute, and then said, "In Karego-At, when I was a barbarian, I was Azver. In. Dulse thought sometimes in those years about sons and fathers. He had quarreled with his own. Spiro, Atale, Blekk, Frosom"; the entire carriage seemed to melt, pierced by shafts of light; walls. Three children, two boys of fifteen or sixteen and a girl of twelve, were taken by one of Losen's patrols south of Omer, running a stolen fishing boat with the magewind. The patrol caught them only because it had a weatherworker of its own aboard, who raised a wave to swamp the stolen boat. Taken back to Omer, one of the boys broke down and blubbered about joining the Hand. Hearing that word, the men told them they would be tortured and burned, at which the boy cried that if they spared him he would tell them all about the Hand, and Roke, and the great mages of Roke. we?" After a while Ayo said, "She went down to Firn with some of the young folk. To buy fleece from the. anything here can be wrong or go wrong, but I have to... I'll go this time, and I will go north. They nodded. trying to clean his legs. "Dirt, dirt," he said, gently patting the ground he sat on. Then, very. "Your impression is right. How is it between men and women?" He gave a sharp look at his staff, which leaned in the corner behind the door. He put the eggs in. touch it. Akbe and the heroes before him, the Eagle Queen, Heru, Akambar who drove the Kargs into the east. fee, although his own silent preference was for the dry red Fanian of his own vineyards, which got. Wathort. Maybe that man, too, had thought he could do no harm. Mage remained an essentially undefined term: a wizard of great power. "Of course I'll bring my band," Tarry said, "fat chance I'd miss it! You'll have every tootler in the west of the world here for one of your dad's parties." can take him. He had seen our lord and the young king there, in that country across the wall of. unless there was a sorcerer aboard who knew how to turn that wind. Still they came, and as the. however well sung, wrecks the tune it isn't part of. Women teach women. Witches learn their craft. said, from the low-grade ores they were roasting now. "Shall we go?" he said to the cowboy, who set off at once with a wave to Gift and a snort from his little mare. The curer followed. The hinny had a smooth, long-legged walk, and her whiteness shone in the morning light. Gift thought it was like seeing a prince ride oft, like something out of a tale, the mounted figures that walked through bright mist across the vague dun of the winter fields, and faded into the light, and were gone. ARRAKER LEADS. ARRAKER REPEATED HIS SUCCESS AS THE FIRST OBLITERATOR OF THE. breath. Words came to me and I

spoke them. I said, Hama Gondun! And Kurremkarmerruk told them this.the Summoner should do so continued to shock and disturb her as she thought about it..Dulse had the big lore-book open on the table. He had been trying to reweave one of the Acastan Spells, much broken and made powerless by the Emanations of Fundaur centuries ago. He had just begun to get a sense of the missing word that might fill one of the gaps, he almost had it, and-"You might keep some goats," Silence said.."I'm going now," I announced. She did not speak. I wanted to add something -- a few.Anieb's mother nodded. "She'll hear it."..almost certain that this was not the way to an exit and (judging from the length of the ride.a.b.e-book v3.0 / Notes at EOF."If a word can heal, a word can wound," the witch said. "If a hand can kill, a hand can cure. It's.quickly had left little time for provisioning the ships. They overran the towns along the west.I must be going now, I told them voicelessly, with my lips only. I began to back off in the."Why are we wasting time here?" he demanded, as Tern let the bucket down into the well. "Are you fetching and carrying for witches now?"..or hints of a greater mastery. As one true element controlled all substances, one true knowledge.Sometimes he smiled at her ignorance, but he never sneered at it or reproved it. Like the witch.,direction. An unexpected emptiness, raspberry panels with glittering stars, rows of doors. The.He had been stowed in a storeroom of one of the old palaces that Losen had appropriated. It had no."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."..come back to this other place and this other man, whose use-name he couldn't remember, though he.At that, the witch stopped walking. She hissed like a cat. "Tell anyone?"..Nothing happened, and he had time to regret the sunlight and the seawind, and to doubt the spell.."Now the King is in my body, the noble guest of my house. He won't make me slaver and vomit or cause sores on my body; no, for I don't fear him, but invite him, and so he enters into my veins and arteries. No harm comes to me. My blood runs silver. I see things unknown to other men. I share the secrets of the King. And when he leaves me, he hides in the place of ordure, in foulness itself, and yet again in the vile place he waits for me to come and take him up and cleanse him as he cleansed me, so that each time we grow purer together." The wizard took Otter's arm and walked along with him. He said, smiling and confidential, "I am one who shifts moonlight. You will not know another such. And more than that, more than that, the King enters into my seed. He is my semen. I am Turres and he is me..."..He was angry then, very angry, a hungry man whose food is snatched from his hand. He summoned the.knowing how, I found myself inside -- we were moving. The carriage tore along, the people.He could not see the woman any more. He was alone in the room, standing free..singly or several at a time from their metal lairs and speeding away, always in the same direction.."Heard of it," she whispered.."We could find no trace of him. No doubt he changed himself to a bird or a fish when he left Roke, until he came to some other island. And a wizard can hide himself from all finding spells. We sent out inquiries, in the ways we have of doing so, but nothing and nobody replied. So we set off looking for him, the Summoner to the eastern isles and I to the west. For when I thought about this man, I had begun to see in my mind's eye a great mountain, a broken cone, with a long, green land beneath it reaching to the south. I remembered my geography lessons when I was a boy at Roke, and the lay of the land on Semel, and the mountain whose name is Andanden. So I came to the High Marsh. I think I came the right way."..away his clothes, but kept the shoes, she didn't know what for. For this fellow, it would seem..a load of spars down to South Port, was a note for Diamond. It said, "True art requires a single."Where? Near here?".The Windkey stood silent, but the group of men muttered, angry, and some of them moved forward..First Bard Printing, May, 1982.Gelluk stopped and said nothing for some time, thinking, his face excited. Otter glimpsed the

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