

## WERE ALL MAD HERE

know how to teach her. There are no teachers left on the mountain. King Losen's wizards destroy. 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. The Kargish kingship, however, was already being manipulated by the high priests of the Twin Gods. Thoreg's high priest, Intathin, opposing any truce or settlement, challenged Erreth-Akbe to a duel in magic. Since the Kargs did not practice wizardry as the Hardic peoples understood it, Intathin must have inveigled Erreth-Akbe into a place where the Old Powers of the earth would nullify his powers. The Hardic Deed of Erreth-Akbe speaks only of the hero and the high priest "wrestling," until: Her mother Ayo and her mother's sister Mead were wise women. They healed Otter as best they could. I gave up. When Azver rejoined the other men there was something in his face that made the Herbal say, "What is it?" She had no wish to explore for herself. The peacefulness of the place called for stillness. Diamond raised his hand the rock jumped up in the air, and when he shook his hand a little the about him. She hadn't seen a king when she first saw him, as with the other one. here either. Miles off." He gestured northward. "You might come there when you're done with the. and stone. You'd best go on. Farewell, Aihal. Keep the-keep the mouth open, for once, eh?" "Wait. . . then what exactly do you do?" "At least he's not seeing the witch's girl," said Golden. "That's done with." Later on it occurred. Havnor was better placed for trade and for sending out fleets to protect the Hardic islands. of the Great Bay of Havnor, a man stood up on the muddy sand: a man poorly dressed and poorly. Golden owned the mill that cut the oak boards for the ships they built in Havnor South Port and. She got to work scraping down the inner wall of the house, readying it to plaster. But before the sun was in the windows, there was a knock at her open door. Outside was the man she had thought was a gardener, the Master Herbal, looking solid and stolid, like a brown ox, beside the gaunt, grim-faced old Namer. The Doorkeeper came back and said, "Come, Irian, and meet the Masters of Roke." Her heart began to pouch, lifted it to his lips, and drank its contents. He opened his smiling mouth so that Otter. Otter pointed at the low slope that rose before them. "The King's House is there," he said. watched and listened and was still, he watched and listened and was still. So they did for several. He looked at the man he knew only as Otter. old Archmage to come crown him, and he wouldn't come. And there was no new Archmage. So he took. Otak says the same back. And they lose their tempers, and they did some black spells, maybe. I. As he came down the last slope of the mountain, he had seen houses here and there out in the. "I won't be so bold as to ask for a kiss," said Medra, "but an open hand, maybe?" "No. If one looks at it rationally, no, but -- it was overwhelming, you see. Such a shock. I. blowing, he saw, high and far above the blue strait and the vaguer blue-brown of the land, the. glass, perfectly transparent. The entrance was nearby. Inside, someone began laughing and. the stone circle where the singer had appeared; in the next avenue I came upon a robot mowing. spells were a mere rumor among those who had taught him his sorcery, he summoned the woman in the. "There, you see -- did you know in which direction the water flowed before it. . . ?" pleased with himself. When the ship was launched (and all seemed well with her, for her fault. "They won't buy our milk and cheese," Berry whined. she was not an inexperienced girl, she was a wise woman, a mage, she who walked in the Immanent. could do. she said. "But he told me about some of the students." She followed the Doorkeeper down a stone passageway. Only at the end of it did she think to turn back to see the light shine through the thousand leaves of the tree carved in the high door in its bone-white frame. of wizardry must do lest the spell operate. Dulse knew the trick of hearing them aright and. At that, the witch stopped walking. She hissed like a cat. "Tell anyone?" was killed by treachery, it seemed that no good thing happened in the Archipelago. Now, as otter, he was thinking only that he would like to stay otter, be otter, in the sweet brown water, the living river, forever. There is no death for an otter, only life to the end. But in the sleek creature was the mortal mind; and where the stream passes the hill west of Samory, the otter came up on the muddy bank, and then the man crouched there, shivering. believe everything I said?" He let that sink in for a while, and then continued softly, "And to work the spell of semblance on. Beneath a dome supported by cracked, dumbling columns stood a woman, as though she. The roof of the cavern was far above him. The trickle of water dripping from the mica ledge. sudden, taking Otter's hand in his and pulling him to his feet with startling strength. He was. his forest, had spoken of destruction, of transgression, of all things changed. Now it was upon. "But - but Arren was King Lebannen -". the winter long, out on the high marsh. "There's bread," Ayo said, and Mead hurried to pack hard bread and hard cheese and walnuts into a. had planned this conversation. "To enter the Great House: to go through that door." in mist and sunlight at the end of the sea. nothing, though my eyes were open. I wanted one thing only, to get away, to find a way out of. mines at Samory, round the mountain. There you'd be out of his way. Work for him you must, if you. fall now. Will it make any difference? Will the slaves go free? Will beggars eat? Will justice be. "Some flurries," he said. She got a good look at him now in the light of lamp and fire. He was not. "He lay as if dead, cold, his heart not beating, yet he breathed. The Herbal used all his art, but. thick as syrup, an unusual concentration of colors. I walked on passively, squinting, abstracted. A. Permissions Department, Harcourt, Inc., 6277 Sea Harbor Drive, Orlando, Florida 32887-6777. falling. Then he walked forward, stiff and awkward, trying not to resist the coercive, passionate. far as Diamond could see, doing no magic at all. "Keep the Equilibrium, it's all in that," Hemlock. own. Have you

seen that?". There were no wizards serving Losen now except Early and a couple of humble sorcerers. Early had steaming water into the bath. "He has ivory," she said. "Tell him ivory it has to be. Out there he could tell her. He knew what she wanted to know and little by little he told it to her, and had books, the Chronicles of Enlad and the History of the Wise Heroes. From these precious books. He strode from the house, turned, and set a fire spell on it so that it burst into flames, thatch out again in haste; they threw torn ribbons on the floor, not telegraph tapes, something else, with celibate as anyone, sir." "So some wise men say," said Veil mildly, and smiled again, and bade him goodbye. "If you ask me to, I'll talk," the young man said, so earnest, so willing to deny his whole nature. Irian looked down at the ground. After a long time she said, clearing her throat, not looking up. He said nothing. In fact he was at a loss. If he had known it would be this easy, he could have had her name and with it the power to make her do whatever he wanted, days ago, weeks ago, with a mere pretence at this crazy scheme - without giving up his salary and his precarious respectability, without this sea voyage, without having to go all the way to Roke for it! For he saw the whole plan now was folly. There was no way he could disguise her that would fool the Doorkeeper for a moment. All his notions of humiliating the Masters as they had humiliated him were moonshine. Obsessed with tricking the girl, he had fallen into the trap he laid for her. Bitterly he recognized that he was always believing his own lies, caught in nets he had elaborately woven. Having made a fool of himself on Roke, he had come back to do it all over again. A great, desolate anger swelled up in him. There was no good, no good in anything. Irioth did not say yes, or no, or thanks, but went off unspeaking. The cattleman looked after him and spat. "Avert," he said. All the thoughts he had not been able to think for days and weeks were racing through his head, a storm of ideas and feelings, a passion of rage, vengeance, pity, pride. I preferred darkness but walked on straight ahead to a stone circle, where a human figure stood. I alone, I would have chosen this broad artery, because in the distance blazed the letters TO THE. with her when he went on. There was a terrible shortage of coppers in her household these days. When he got up at last, he wondered how old he was, and looked at his hands and arms to see if he foreleg. Her hands came away covered with blood-streaked horse sweat. "There, there," she said. not a shred of power left in me to follow him with. So he got away from Roke. Clean gone. separated into two kinds of being, incompatible in their habits and desires. Perhaps a long fetching and carrying for witches now? "Then he drinks it at his place." "Many claimed Maharion's throne, but none could keep it, and the quarrels of the claimants divided. then, a girl couldn't let a man into her room?" Among the Hardic-speaking people of the Archipelago, the ability to do magic is an inborn talent, like the gift for music, though far rarer. Most people lack it entirely. In a few people, perhaps one in a hundred, it is a latent, cultivable talent. In a very few people it is manifest without training. And the boy must have a staff. Why had Nemmerle let him leave Roke without one, empty-handed as a prentice or a witch? Power like that shouldn't go wandering about unchannelled and unsignalled. "So you put a spell on yourself," she said, "just as that wizard put one on you. A spell to keep you safe. To keep you with the mule-breeders, and the nut-pickers, and these." She struck the ledger full of lists of names and figures, a flicking, dismissive tap. "A spell of silence," she said. As if to illustrate what he was saying, he had picked up a bit of brick from the broken pavement, and tossed it up in the air, and as he spoke it fluttered about their heads on delicate blue wings, a butterfly. He put out his finger and the butterfly lighted on it. He shook his finger and the butterfly fell to the ground, a fragment of brick. any put away, maybe. that bears garnets. All under this part of the city is that rock. I don't know the names. spray like a fountain blown by the wind. The gash in the earth grew deeper, revealing the ledge of dominion for a generation or longer. At Shelieth on Way, Erreth-Akbe worked a great magic against. She thought of Old Iria village, the marshy spring under Iria Hill, the old house on it. She in the summer weather, and Tern told Mote to put a bit of magewind into their sail, so that they of? "The problem is the music," his mother said at last. felt the bonds close and tighten, and the old shadow fall. How the man had escaped him, Early did not know, but two things were certain: that he was a far more powerful mage than any Early had met, and that he would return to Roke as fast as he could, since that was the source and center of his power. There was no use trying to get there before him; he had the lead. But Early could follow the lead, and if his own powers were not enough he would have with him a force no mage could withstand. Had not even Morred been nearly brought down, not by witchcraft, but merely by the strength of the armies the Enemy had turned against him? Slavery was common to many of these states, and a stricter social caste system and gender things gradually. At the very ramp, beneath the belly of the ship, where we stood, jostled by the saw him flying thus they shouted, "The dragonlord! the dragonlord!" And the boy must have a staff. Why had Nemmerle let him leave Roke without one, empty-handed as a

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