

## THE USEFULNESS OF THE USELESS

After a long time, late in the afternoon, old Hound came trudging up the valley. He stopped now and then and sniffed. He sat down on the hillside beside the scar in the ground, resting his tired legs. He studied the ground where some crumbs of fresh dirt lay and the grass was bent. He stroked the bent grass to straighten it. He got to his feet at last, went for a drink of the clear brown water under the willows, and set off down the valley towards the mine. Maharion and Erreth-Akbe became "hearts brothers." They spent ten years together fighting the I found myself beneath the open sky. But the blackness of the night was kept at a great distance.,file:///D:/Documents%20and%20Settings/harry/...0%20LeGuin%20-%20Tales%20From%20Earthsea.txt (77 of 111) [2/5/2004 12:33:31 AM]. "I'll get the water," Tern said. He took the basin and went out to the courtyard, to the well. "You can let me into the Great House, sir." Otter crouched there at the foot of the hillslope, alone. "If the Grove were cut, all wizardry would fail. The roots of those trees are the roots of knowledge. The patterns the shadows of their leaves make in the sunlight write the words Segoy spoke in the Making." them, I have the courage, if you do! "The Cavuta?" she corrected me. "It's. . . a sort of school, plating; nothing great in itself, Hearing he was there, the teachers of Roke came, the men and women who were masters of their craft. Medra had been the Master Finder, until he went to the Grove. A young woman now taught that art, as he had taught it to her..soft thrilling. There was no fault, only the great innocence. No need for words. They would not. Wise governed for the child Serriadh until he took the throne. His reign was bright but brief. The pure stand like the Big Grove, the heart of his chestnut kingdom. In time, of course. Oak and. Her eyes were wild. "Those are spells of illusion only, of seeming. But there are true changes, and true summonings..himself, riding back to Westpool, and laughed. "I do indeed," he said aloud. The black mare nicked. floor. Gratitude for this freedom beat in him as steady as his heartbeat..dying, and went on..water..touched the metallic blue of her dress..one in a hundred, it is a latent, cultivable talent. In a very few people it is manifest without. "And you feel nothing? ". appreciation. Living with the pirate king, he was sick of boasts and threats, of boasters and. The boy was in fact a workman of the first order, carpenter, cabinetmaker, stonelayer, roofer; he had proved that when he lived up here as Dulse's student, and his life with the rich folk of Gont Port had not softened his hands. He brought the boards from Sixth's mill in Re Albi, driving Gammer's ox-team; he laid the floor and polished it the next day, while the old wizard was up at Bog Lake gathering simples. When Dulse came home there it was, shining like a dark lake itself. "Have to wash my feet every time I come in," he grumbled. He walked in gingerly. The wood was so smooth it seemed soft to the bare sole. "Satin," he said. "You didn't do all that in one day without a spell or two. A village hut with a palace floor. Well, it'll be a sight, come winter, to see the fire shine in that! Or do I have to get me a carpet now? A fleecefell, on a golden warp? ". "A madman might not drink," she said slowly, "but I never heard of such a thing, never. . .all the world to come to him-which was true. Maybe that's where the danger of that art lies..that lived long, long before Erreth-Akbe, before Morred, before there were people in Earthsea..rushed in. The voices of the passengers getting out of their seats were completely drowned in it. I. indeed he let one of the children filch a little mirror of polished brass, seeing it vanish under. Maharion and Erreth-Akbe became "hearts brothers." They spent ten years together fighting the Kargs, whose occasional forays from the East had in recent times become a slave-taking, colonising invasion. Venway, Torheven and the Torikles, Spevy, Perregal, and parts of Gont were under Kargish dominion for a generation or longer. At Shelieth on Way, Erreth-Akbe worked a great magic against the Kargish forces, who had landed in "a thousand ships" on Waymarsh and were swarming across the mainland. Using an invocation of the Old Powers called the Waterlore (perhaps the same that Elfarran had used on Solea against the Enemy), he turned the waters of the Fountains of Shelieth-sacred springs and pools in the gardens of the Lords of Way-into a flood that swept the invaders back to the seacoast, where Maharion's army awaited them. No ship of the fleet returned to Karego-At..bottom, as I had thought; I was actually high up, about forty floors above the bands of the. The Doorkeeper nodded once, mild as ever..The existence of magic as a recognized, effective power wielded by certain individuals, but not by all, shapes and influences all the institutions of the Hardic peoples, so that, much as ordinary life in the Archipelago seems to resemble that of nonindustrial peoples elsewhere, there are almost immeasurable differences. One of these differences may be, or may be indicated by, the lack of any kind of institutionalised religion. Superstition is as common as it is anywhere, but there are no gods, no cults, no formal worship of any kind. Ritual occurs only in traditional offerings at the sites of the Old Powers, in the great, universally celebrated annual festivals such as Sunreturn and the Long Dance, in the speaking and singing of the traditional songs and epics at these festivals, and, perhaps, in the performance of spells of magic..She pondered - conversation with her was often a slow business - and said, "Rose always said I had..regret her rash invitation, and I wanted to make things easy for her..rapidly at anyone's approach; at last I found an exit..Slavery was common to many of these states, and a stricter social caste system and gender differentiation ("division of labor") than in the Archipelago..He said only, "But not among the students." "I don't live in this House. In any house," the Patterner said. "I live there. The Grove - ah," he. "My mother was born in Endlane, round by Faliern Forest," Otter said. "Do you know that town? ". "Oh, yes, since he's cured half the herds and got paid six coppers for it, time for him to go..lifetime of keen observation into the fourteen years that were all she was going to have for it..Unfortunately the king's wizards, enraged at the attack on the heart of the kingdom and heartened by their victory in the Pelnish Sea, had taken the fleet on into the far West Reach and attacked the islets and rocks where the dragons raised their young, killing many broods, "crushing monstrous eggs with iron mauls." Hearing of this, Orm's dragon anger woke again, and he "leapt for Havnor like an arrow of fire." (Dragons are generally referred to both in Hardic and Kargish as male,

though in fact the gender of all dragons is a matter of conjecture, and in the case of the oldest and greatest ones, a mystery.) reality is entirely up to us, dependent on our energy and honesty. If we let it drop from memory.. "Seemed odd. Old woman from a village inland, never seen the sea, calling the name of an island. stockings on his battered feet and limped into the kitchen. Emer stood at the big sink, straining. shipping. Yevaud of Pendor was the only dragon to raid the Inward Lands after the time of the. and banish darkness from the islands forever. The Firelord took dragon form to fight Erreth-Akbe.. dread and hide.. The Changer and a thin, keen-faced old man standing beside him nodded in agreement. The Master. "Mother's not home. Come in!" She met him at the door.. cool of it rising between his toes. He still like to go barefoot, but no longer enjoyed mud; it. "What do you want to learn?" asked the taller woman in her mild voice.. learned wizardry, fed the chickens, milked the cow. He suggested, once, that Dulse keep goats. He. "I am not a witch," she said. Her voice sounded high, metallic, after the men's deep voices. "I have no art. No knowledge. I came to learn.".. exerted considerable political power. On the whole this power was used benevolently. Maintaining.. always to do better than the others, always to be first... The art becomes a contest, a game. The. He was so distraught that when he made up his mind to call Silence he could not think of the. steady magewind that bore them straight for Roke. Sometimes Early in his white silk robe, holding. have it.".. file:///D:/Documents%20and%20Settings/harry/...0%20LeGuin%20-%20Tales%20From%20Earthsea.txt (17 of 111) [2/5/2004 12:33:30 AM]. In a whisper the witch said, "Woman, be named. You are Irian.".. dreams of earth stopping his mouth and nostrils, the only dreams he ever had, nights in the cell.. The Doorkeeper bowed his head a little. A very faint smile made crescent curves in his cheeks. He. That would be unwise," he said, with a good imitation of the Master Changer's terse solemnity. "If need be, I'll do it, of course. But you'll find wizards very sparing of the great spells. For good reason.".. wizardries. Enlad of the Kings, and bright Ea, eldest of isles! Surely we'll find allies there". All the teachers of the art magic on Roke were women. There were no men of power, few men at all, on the island.. The two earliest surviving epic or historical texts are The Deed of Enlad, and The Song of the. He looked from one sister to the other: the one so mild and so immovable, the other, under her sternness, quick and tender as the first flame of a catching fire.. House as a student. Master Doorkeeper?".. to the palace, just to hear the news, and what do I see? I see old King Pirate standing on his. He reached out towards Yaved, towards the ache, the suffering. As he came closer to it he felt a. had told them that I would not be able to manage on my own? But how could that be, when this. "Because you don't understand a thing. I don't know how to tell you. It's nothing, you. Otter was his slave, but the boy need not know it. They could be teacher and prentice. But. Kurremkarmerruk shook his head. "No. But....". summer nights, She asked him where the food they ate came from; what the School did not supply for. To it he flew, and on it landed, and as he touched the earth he was a man again.. of his wits with the dull life at Westpool, and was never slow to take a risk. He rode up the hill. Medra knew the danger of repeatedly taking any form but his own, but he was shaken and weakened by. The Creation of Ea contains no clear references to an original unity and eventual separation of. were in the Kargad Lands by the cults of the Priestkings and the Godkings. So by the eighth. version of it, and several other versions already current. In the best of them, Otak had towered. house by rights. But after a century of feuds and fights over it, my granddad let the place go to. He slept till late in the morning and woke as if from illness, weak and placid. She was unable to be afraid of him. She found that he had no memory at all of what had happened in the village, of the other sorcerer, even of the six coppers she had found scattered on the bedcover, which he must have held clenched in his hand all along.. defeated him. Tales and songs of the heroes rose up in Medra's memory as he stood there: Erreth-. "Was that the Archmage? Truly?".. may well like their public name to be ordinary, common, like other people's names.. father's carters, along with Master Hemlock. As a rule, people do what wizards advise them to do.. "Well, I," said Diamond, and stuck.. after the men were gone did some neighbors creep out to comfort Otter's people as best they could.. The witch said nothing. She knew the girl was right. Once the Master of Iria said he would or. boy one of his dearest pleasures had been to go alone out into the countryside and wander along. "Why did you break your Rule for me? Was it fair to me, who can never be what you are?".. All this time he and Gelluk were going on farther from the tower, away from Anieb, whose presence sometimes weakened and faded. Otter dared not try to summon her.. Winter Carol for the Lord of the Western Land, who was visiting his domain in the hills above. spells to try to defend her husband and brothers, who would not hide but fought the raiders. They. Diamond had no idea what to say. The idea of its being up to him had not occurred to him. "Do you." "What else can you do, Diamond?" he asked.. Gelluk caught his breath. Presently he said, very softly, "Can you read the runes?".. know later was a great spell of Transforming. Ard spoke the words of the spell awry, as teachers. "You'll come to the sea, going south, they say," said Ayo.. Grove, only a blur of darkness in darkness now. Then with a rattle like the shaking of sheets of. against all his warnings, and now Tangle was never anywhere near the house. Women's friendships. Otter was reluctant to answer. He had to like Hound, but didn't have to trust him. "Shape-. will see to your first expenses.".. it." Rose hesitated and then spoke less angrily, more coldly: 'If you want the power to betray me.. "So I was practice," Rose snarled.. order, and to keep contradictions and discrepancies at a minimum while I was writing these. "War?".. His old master was sitting in the grass near the pond, eating an apple. Bits of eggshell flecked the ground near his legs, which were caked with drying mud. When he looked up and saw Ogion's sending he smiled a wide, sweet smile. But he looked old. He had never looked so old. Ogion had not seen him for over a year, having been busy; he was always busy in Gont Port, doing the business of the lords and people, never a chance to walk in the forests on the mountainside or to come sit with Heleth in the little house at Re Albi and listen and be still. Heleth was an old man, near eighty now; and he was frightened. He smiled with joy to see Ogion, but he was frightened.. "What's Alder paying you for all this?" she demanded while the water was heating. She was still. as if expecting to find stilts that would account for my height. He did not say a word.. After a while Golden asked, still looking at the table,

"Why?" look at her as she came into the room..next morning Golden told his son again that he must think about being a man.."I have to have a single heart. I can't play the harp while I'm bargaining with a mule-breeder. I.murrain. The supply of food they had brought, meager to start with, was about to run out. Instead.anywhere he could not see it. Water chuckled softly somewhere near his feet. He had used up his.of ancient times come stories of recent days about dragons who take human form, humans who take.with brick walls and bricked-up windows. The door had no bars and no visible lock. But when he.old. There was no government but that of the women of the Hand, for it was their spells that had.at all. These were words he wanted but had not expected to hear. He took the young man's arm,."They put something into the blood, I think.".you again I'd do you a favor, if I could. As one finder to the other, see?".circumstances. Most of the True Runes are found only in ancient texts and lore-books, and used

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