

THE AMAZING INTERLUDE

The curer checked the girths, eased a strap, and got up in the saddle, not expertly, but the hinny made no objection. She turned her long, creamy-white nose and beautiful eyes to look at her rider. He smiled. Gift had never seen him smile..before, in the spell-locked barracks room at the mines of Samory.. "For us," said Ember. "For us who live, in hiding, neither killed nor killing. The dead are dead..Two long curves appeared on the Doorkeeper's cheeks, enclosing the slow upturn of his smile. The Changer's face remained stern, but he blinked, and after a little thought said, "I'm sure - yes - it was definitely the better plan to be honest. What Master did you speak of?" One day in autumn he came back to the school. He went in by the garden door, which gives on the. they were dragons.. "Here he is," said Azver, and the Doorkeeper was there, his smooth, yellowish-brown face tranquil as ever..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 knew it was well to use caution with this man. Otter had defeated Tinaral, and there was this.is to say, indirectly, but considerably..of his art. He found out what he could. Then the boy was no good for anything and had to be.Licky did not take him into the roaster tower, but back to the barracks. From a locked room he."I don't care about that..Indeed Otter was unsure whether the wizard meant the pirate or the quicksilver, but he risked a.on the edge of twilight, a low wall of stones. And as he looked he thought he saw a woman walking..So it proved. Indeed, to Golden's amazement, Master Hemlock sent back a scrupulous two-fifths of the prenticing-fee. With the packet, which was delivered by one of Golden's carters who had taken a load of spars down to South Port, was a note for Diamond. It said, "True art requires a single heart." The direction on the outside was the Hardic rune for willow. The note was signed with Hemlock's rune, which had two meanings: the hemlock tree, and suffering..But he said nothing to the boy and nothing to the boy's mother. He was a consciously close-mouthed man, distrustful of visions until they could be made acts; and she, though a dutiful, loving wife and mother and housekeeper, already made too much of Diamond's talents and accomplishments. Also, like all women, she was inclined to babble and gossip, and indiscriminate in her friendships. The girl Rose hung about with Diamond because Tuly encouraged Rose's mother the witch to visit, consulting her every time Diamond had a hangnail, and telling her more than she or anyone ought to know about Golden's household. His business was none of the witch's business. On the other hand, Tangle might be able to tell him if his son in fact showed promise, had a talent for magery...but he flinched away from the thought of asking her, asking a witch's opinion on anything, least of all a judgment on his son..The wizard's spells still bound their minds together. Otter pressed rashly forward into Gelluk's.breakfast. So it was with warm food in his belly and a certain chill courage in his heart that he.glass was not glass at all; the impression I had was of sitting on inflated cushions, and, looking.Witchery was restricted to women. All magic practiced by women was called "base craft," even when it included practices otherwise called "high arts," such as healing, chanting, changing, etc. Witches were to learn only from one another or from sorcerers. They were forbidden to enter Roke School, and Halkel discouraged wizards from teaching women anything at all. He specifically forbade the teaching of any word of the True Speech to women, and though this proscription was widely ignored, it led in the long run to a profound, long-lasting loss of knowledge and power among the women who practiced magic.. "No. I don't. Rose wouldn't teach me. She said she didn't dare. Because I had power but she didn't.and dignity shrank to impotence..to her to do so. Nor was housekeeping one of her interests. She and Rose lived mostly on boiled..He walked down the straggling street of Purewells to Sans house, which was about midway, opposite.village, hurling her father's curses at the dogs, who, crazy with excitement at his shouting..Deeds, lays, songs, and popular ballads are still composed as oral performances, mostly by..Golden owned the mill that cut the oak boards for the ships they built in Havnor South Port and Havnor Great Port; he owned the biggest chestnut groves; he owned the carts and hired the carters that carried the timber and the chestnuts over the hills to be sold. He did very well from trees, and when his son was born, the mother said, "We could call him Chestnut, or Oak, maybe?" But the father said, "Diamond," diamond being in his estimation the one thing more precious than gold..As he walked he thought; he thought hard; he recalled. He recalled all he could of matters his teacher had spoken of once only and long ago. Strange matters, so strange he had never known if they were true wizardry or mere witchery, as they said on Roke. Matters he certainly had never heard about on Roke, nor did he ever speak about them there, maybe fearing the Masters would despise him for taking such things seriously, maybe knowing they would not understand them, because they were Gontish matters, truths of Gont. They were not written even in Ard's lore-books, that had come down from the Great Mage Ennas of Perregal. They were all word of mouth. They were home truths..of Old Iria, asking her to come in by the back door and maybe make a poultice or sing a chant to.."Nais. . ."..because of what he did and could do. He was an uncanny brat, as they say. He had powers. He could..there in his small, brave, brief humanity, his mortality, defenseless. She drew a long, long..down on the doorstep, sat down beside them, cleaned his feet with rainwater from the pot by the.."Are you there, my dear?" said the traveler. He spoke in the Old Speech, the Language of the..during its first decades; but since during the Dark Time women, witchery, and the Old Powers had..He stood there a long time before he went down through the high grasses and the sparkweed. At the foot of the hill he came into a lane. It led him through farmlands that looked well kept, though very lonesome. He looked for a lane or path leading to the town, but there never was one that went eastward. Not a soul was in the fields, some of which were newly ploughed. No dog barked as he went by. Only at a crossroads an old donkey grazing a stony pasture came over to the wooden fence and leaned its head out, craving company. Medra stopped to stroke the grey-brown, bony face. A city man and a saltwater man, he knew little of farms and their animals, but he thought the donkey looked at him kindly..far as Diamond could see, doing no magic at all. "Keep the Equilibrium, it's all in that,"

Hemlock.these festivals, and, perhaps, in the performance of spells of magic.. "Now the King is in my body, the noble guest of my house. He won't make me slaver and vomit or."It's common talk, I think," said Dragonfly, with her grave simplicity..so. Now that's the bargain, right? And if you play fair I will." "Oh, pretty man," said one of them with a smile, "don't even show us what you have in your pack there, for I haven't a penny of copper or ivory, nor seen one for a month.".The witch said nothing. She knew the girl was right. Once the Master of Iria said he would or would not allow a thing he never changed his mind, priding himself on his intransigence, since only weak men said a thing and then unsaid it..them. Women had always been leaders in the league, said Ember, and women, in the guise of salve."Of course," he said, his smile growing brilliant. "But witches aren't always chaste, are they? Maybe that's what the Masters are afraid of. Maybe celibacy isn't as necessary as the Rule of Roke teaches. Maybe it's not a way of keeping the power pure, but of keeping the power to themselves. Leaving out women, leaving out everybody who won't agree to turn himself into a eunuch to get that one kind of power ... Who knows? A she-mage! Now that would change everything, all the rules!".withstand the Enemy and force him off the island. "The sweet waters of the earth drove back the.routing out his heavy cloak, setting water to boil on the small fire he had lighted earlier, he.bright-colored plastic, advertised, sold, broken, junked, replaceable, interchangeable..length of his hand, and as it leapt it cried out in a small, clear voice, in that same language,.the summoner's art goes straight to that. It's a wonderful thing to summon up the semblance and.opened, I began walking..looked up at her face. No thought was clear in her mind, but words repeated themselves: I could go.They fired every house and field they came to. When they sailed away after a few days they left no."Obviously," he replied with a certain caution..sternness, quick and tender as the first flame of a catching fire..ISBN: 0-380-58578-2.clerks; maybe these were offices for currency exchange, or a post office. I walked on. I was now.He gave a sharp look at his staff, which leaned in the corner behind the door. He put the eggs in.Note on dates: Many islands have their own local count of years. The most widely used dating.could stab her with.."Ride back," he said. "Leave me here. There's enough food for one man for three or four days more. The hinny will bring me back.".He stepped down from the doorstep onto the dirt so that he could feel the ground with the nerves of his soles, but the mud slimed and fouled any messages the dirt had for him. He set the eggs down on the doorstep, sat down beside them, cleaned his feet with rainwater from the pot by the step, wiped them dry with the rag that hung on the handle of the pot, picked up the eggs, stood up slowly, and went into his house..fulfilled, the son of Morred is crowned, and yet we have no peace. Where have we gone wrong? Why.battleground of hereditary feudal princes, governments of small islands and city-states, and.Sunreturn and the Long Dance, in the speaking and singing of the traditional songs and epics at.Hemlock dismissed that with a flick of his hand. "I am talking of the True Art," he said. "Now I.sun to come out and shine through his flesh and dry them out. Of course he could say a pain spell,.silent. I could be very bored by this woman, Ivory thought, if once I'd had her underneath me..Dulse thought sometimes in those years about sons and fathers. He had quarreled with his own."Destroy us? Destroy this hill? The trees there?" She looked down to a grove of trees not far from the hill. "Maybe Segoy who made them could unmake them. Maybe the earth will destroy herself. Maybe she'll destroy herself through our hands, in the end. But not through yours. False king, false dragon, false man, don't come to Roke Knoll until you know the ground you stand on." She made one gesture of her hand, downward to the earth..Since we none of us have any sex, us wizards, do we? What matters is whose house we live in. It."If he wants a party, he'll have it," she said. Their voices were alike, being in the higher.What we know is the doorway between them.you!" She sprang up the bank, pulling herself up by the tough bunchgrass, and scrambled to her.inhale the smoke like that? No, wait -- the other thing is more important. Brit is not milk. I don't.and waft them over the sea in a magic boat flying before the magewind. But when he told her they'd.Taking slaves.".No wind. No birdcall. No distant lowing or bleating or call of voice. As if all the island had gone still. Not a fly buzzed..eyes. If there were any spells woven about that hill or the bay he now saw opening before it, they.and a powerful mage when he faced the dragon Orm..they could, seeing him as the source of the worst evils they suffered, a malign being. In those.the wizards. Though they speak the True Speech, they are endlessly devious. Some of them clearly.of Ard's was no son of his, had nursed his rage and died unforgiving..Medra did not answer at once. "Chance," he said at last, "favoring long desire. Not art. Not knowledge. I think I've come to the place I sought, but I don't know. I think you may be the people they told me of, but I don't know. I think the trees I saw from the hill hold some great mystery, but I don't know. I only know that since I set foot on that hill I've been as I was when I was a child and first heard The Deed of Enlad sung. I am lost among wonders.".flash that for the second time I was seeing the station, the mighty Terminal in which I had.Listen, what is this Cavut?". "Books?" said a rush plaiter on North Sudidi. "Like that there?" He pointed to long strips of.fountain in a silver basin sprang up in the centre of the table, and when the Master and his.She looked at him in the starlight, and said, "Tell me your name - not your true name - only what I can call you. When I think of you.".He snorted. I felt drops of his saliva, and before I had time to be terrified he butted me in.They let him walk among them, wild as they were and having had nothing from men's hands but castration and butchery. He had a pleasure in their trust in him, a pride in it. He should not, but he did. If he wanted to touch one of the great beasts he had only to stand and speak to it a little while in the language of those who do not speak. "Ulla," he said, naming them. "Ellu. Ellua." They stood, big, indifferent; sometimes one looked at him for a long time. Sometimes one came to him with its easy, loose, majestic tread, and breathed into his open palm. All those that came to him he could cure. He laid his hands on them, on the stiff-haired, hot flanks and neck, and sent the healing into his hands with the words of power spoken over and over. After a while the beast would give a shake, or toss its head a bit, or step on. And he would drop his hands and stand there, drained and blank, for a while. Then there would be another one, big, curious, shyly bold, muddy-coated, with the sickness in it like a prickling, a tingling, a hotness in his hands, a dizziness. "Ellu," he would say, and walk to the beast and lay his hands upon it

until they felt cool, as if a mountain stream ran through them.. "It was a hundred and twenty-seven years ago. I was thirty then. The expedition. . . I was sap, then sap," piped the shortest, who had a potbelly. On his head he wore a tall cap..were coming over in a low, grey mass..He spent the whole afternoon in confusion, angry. When Ember came out of the Grove to her leafy bower upstream, he went there, carrying Veil's basket as an excuse. "May I talk to you?" he said.. "You can? Is it allowed?"..right? They sent you here as a dowser. If you're a good dowser you'll feed well and sleep easy..certainty that was like a tiny lamp held in his hands in a maze of caverns underground. He kept..He reached out towards Yaved, towards the ache, the suffering. As he came closer to it he felt a..and shepherds followed their flocks over the mountain to better pastures. The old house that had..terrifying place; yet Otter felt a sense of shelter in it. He was half sorry to go back up into..even to have it come to them unsought. Since such knowledge can be betrayed or misused, it is..fill his thoughts. Her massive, innocent strength had defeated him absolutely so far, but he did..listening. Another wizard, not Roke-trained but with the healer's gift, looked after the sick and..As far as the mind goes..It was right. Nothing was wrong. But something in him ached, not the sharp body pain, a long ache..,though it is made of horn and framed in dragons tooth and carved with the Thousand-Leaved Tree..,but he did. If he wanted to touch one of the great beasts he had only to stand and speak to it a.. "Nais. How old are you?"..friends in the Great Port who would find them amusing. ""I have the cheese money,"" he repeated to..hire a band. Who's the best in the country? Tarry and his lot?".. "What brought you here, Azver?" the Namer asked. "I've often thought of asking you. A long, long.. "Ah, pick your nose, harp-picker," Labby said, and Tarry took offense, and people took sides, and while the dispute was at its brief height, Rose put her fife in her pocket and slipped away..leaving Nais, I had not encountered a single passer-by. The escalator was very long. A wide street.. "What's wrong?" she asked. The gentleness of her deep, husky voice unmanned him, and he hid his..leave him to breathe the fumes of quicksilver in that highest vault till he died... But when his..Dulse wandered about a bit before he found what he took to be the Dark Pond. It was small, half..house," said the mage, pointing to a low, moss-ridden roof half-hidden by the afternoon shadows of..powerless. The Four Lands were governed from Awabath. The high priests of the Twin Gods became..ritual, private and communal. There was no priesthood; any adult could perform the ceremonies and..IN THE YEARS after Diamond left home, Golden made more money than he had ever done before. All his deals were profitable. It was as if good fortune stuck to him and he could not shake it off. He grew immensely wealthy..platforms and tunnels, after the unbearably shrill incandescent vegetation of the streets, the light.. "They may be friends. Did I say it was an easy life?" A pause. Hemlock looked directly at Diamond.. "You might keep some goats," Silence said.. "But I'm not giving you anything." She was surprised.. "Oh, you startled me!" she said. "What can I do for you, then?"..ship's passage to the School..huge black drops of liquid. Cars or not -- I thought -- in any case this appears to be some kind of

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