

THE ABYSS

the Gate open because he held the Mountain still." They praised his modesty and did not listen to. I turned and left. The outer door yielded when I pushed it; the large corridor was almost. "The lords of war despise scholars and schoolmasters," said Medra..up ten feet tall and struck Sunbright into a lump of coal with lightning, before foaming at the darkness over a glittering roof. Under the roof is the House of the King. The roof stands high corner, into the interiors of the passageways that glided by, into the features of the people. The speech was also strange, stiff and somehow deformed. "Silence is the answer to everything, and to make free with names, my own included. Who named you, Irian?" off back to the School, and they straggled after him, arguing and debating in frustration and. Listening to him, Medra thought of how he and Anieb had walked in the dark and rain by the faint glimmer that showed them only the next step they could take, and of how they had looked up to the red ridge of the mountain in the dawn..did not see him, only my countrywoman Tenar of the Ring. She said she was not the woman they mother.. "Ard. My teacher." Heleth looked up, his face unreadable, its expression possibly sly. "You didn't. the wind of dawn blew on the sea..." "It won't do," he said, talking to himself in Hardic, and then he said, "I can't do it." Then he. the way and was wandering without heed. He talked, turning sometimes to Otter to guide him or warn. the Changer spoke against it at first, and then agreed.. The shrubbery parted. A winding path. Gravel crunched beneath my feet, shining faintly;. back, because I saw one of her men, down the way, in the tavern. I'll go ask about. Find out if. me the guest book; I signed it and rode up, holding a small, triangular ticket. Someone -- I have. The spasm passed; Heleth answered, "Inside it. There at Yaved." He pointed to the knotted hills. the yells of gulls and dockworkers wreathing the air with a thin, ungainly music, he shut his eyes. Each True Rune has a significance, a connotation or area of meaning, which can be more or less defined in Hardic; but it is better to say that the runes are not words at all, but spells, or acts. Only in the syntax of the Old Speech, however, and only as spoken or written by a wizard, not as a statement but with intention to act, reinforced by voice and gesture-in a spell-does the word or the rune fully release its power.. "Even if you -". The Osskili use the Hardic runes to write their language, since they trade mostly with Hardic-speaking lands.. "I used him to help me get here and to tell me what to say to the Doorkeeper," Irian said. "I'm not here to fool anybody, but to learn what I need to know..". "It would be a terrible long way," said Mead.. Nobody would touch him. They stared from a distance at the heap lying in the doorway of San's. descending from high above, the base of one of those enormous columns that had astonished me. apart. They are safe from sea-pirates in Gont Port. But their safety is their danger; the long bay. They greeted him, and Azver took the word - "Come into the Grove, Master Windkey," he said, "and. There are different kinds of knowledge, after all..". power we give for our power. The lesser state of being we forego. Surely you know that every true. spell? Only he couldn't decide what to turn himself into-a bird, or a wisp of smoke, what would be. wood, but founded deep on magic and made strong with spells.. every child's education are taught and learned aloud, passed on down the years from living voice. corners of the walls shone, brightened by streaks of luminous paint. In the darkest place the girl. truths, immutable simplicities.. this year the patterns of the shadows and the branches and the roots, all the silent language of. out the poker to gather together her namesakes in the hearth, and with a whack knocked the heap. What they had they shared. In that it was indeed Morred's Isle. Nobody on Roke starved or went. strong man in his prime, not likely to retire or die. Among the scholars and other teachers he had. semen. I am Turren and he is me..". growl, like a bear. A moment later a thunderclap rolled off the hidden upper slopes of Gont. Maybe it was to escape the hunt that Medra came to Pendor, a long way west of the Inmost Sea, or maybe some rumor among the women of the Hand on Hosk sent him there. Pendor was a rich island, then, before the dragon Yevaud despoiled it. Wherever Medra had gone until then, he had found the lands like Havnor or worse, sunk in warfare, raids, and piracy, the fields full of weeds, the towns full of thieves. Maybe he thought, at first, that on Pendor he had found Morred's Isle, for the city was beautiful and peaceful and the people prosperous.. I can give you a bit of milk soup, and a penny will be more than enough, thank you." She didn't. The next thing she thought was a beggar, a lost man, in dirty clothes, hugging himself with. strangeness were very difficult. Once the Doorkeeper came in, bringing her a plate with cold meat. Long after the invention of the True Runes, a related but nonmagical runic writing was developed. "I think I've found my little finder," said Gelluk. His voice was deep and soft, like the notes of a viol. "Sleeping in the sunshine, like one whose work has been well done. So you've sent them digging for the Red Mother, have you? Did you know the Red Mother before you came here? Are you a courtier of the King? Here, now, there's no need for ropes and knots." Where he stood, with a flick of his finger, he untied Otter's wrists, and the gagging kerchief fell loose.. The new student cleaned out the henhouse and hoed the bean-patch, learned the meaning of the Glosses of Danemer and the Arcana of the Enlades, and kept his mouth closed. He listened. He heard what Dulse said; sometimes he heard what Dulse thought. He did what Dulse wanted and what Dulse did not know he wanted. His gift was far beyond Dulse's guidance, yet he had been right to come to Re Albi, and they both knew it.. meant. And so we parted with no Archmage chosen.. and when his son was born, the mother said, "We could call him Chestnut, or Oak, maybe?" But the. into the water, feeling the push and stir of the current all along her body. She had never swum in. it when the world was young...". Diamond nodded eagerly.. She went to the house, set out her supper of smoked meat and bread and summer lettuce, and ate it. I put them on my knees. Everyone was seated now.. indeed he let one of the children filch a little mirror of polished brass, seeing it vanish under. "We couldn't hide the wrestle we'd had with him, though we said as little about it as we could. And many there said good riddance, for he'd always been half mad, and now was mad entirely.. For a half millennium or longer, men ambitious to work the great spells of magery bound themselves. "Why can't you do it now?". until:. 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..book, and while doing so, happily discovered a very old one in the Archives in Havnor.. "The witch Rose of our village, lord," she answered, standing straight, though her voice came out high-pitched and rough.. "I know where it is," Anieb said..mouth, and stood waiting to die. She had looked at him..the main Archipelago and the Kargad Lands east of it, while the dragons kept to the westernmost..whoever she may be, has no place among the men on Roke. Eh? The Windkey, the Chanter, the Changer..mystery, but I don't know. I only know that since I set foot on that hill I've been as I was when..house. "Let him crawl home to his mother."..Not much mixing of the Kargish and Archipelagan skin-color types has taken place except on Osskil, since the North Reach is isolated and thinly populated, and the Kargad people have held themselves apart from and often in enmity towards the Archipelagans for two or three millennia..Golden did not praise the boy, not wanting to making him self-conscious or vain about what might be a passing, childish gift, like his sweet treble voice. There was too much fuss already made over that..and jealousy he knew and shrank from, and contempt he remembered. He was glad he was not one of.. "What's your name?" she asked.. "Here he is," said Azver, and the Doorkeeper was there, his smooth, yellowish-brown face tranquil as ever..foreleg. Her hands came away covered with blood-streaked horse sweat. "There, there," she said.. "I'll take those names from you, Irioth, but not your own."..South of Andanden lies a land where the ashes fell a hundred feet deep when last the volcano..didn't like to presume. Whatever he was, he wasn't a beggar by choice..tower were naked or wore only breechclout and moccasins. Otter glanced again at the slave..The early kings and queens of Enlad, among whose names are Lar Ashal, Dohun, Enashen, Timan, and..with women, only women. It did not appear to me to be a powder room, but I had no way of..he got to his feet and went on. He never saw Anieb but he knew she was there. He followed her..He looked about, curious and wary. All over the hill spark-weed was in flower, its long petals blazing yellow in the grass. Children on Havnor knew that flower. They called it sparks from the burning of Ilien, when the Firelord attacked the islands, and Erreth-Akbe fought with him and defeated him. Tales and songs of the heroes rose up in Medra's memory as he stood there: Erreth-Akbe and the heroes before him, the Eagle Queen, Heru, Akambar who drove the Kargs into the east, and Serriadh the peacemaker, and Elfarran of Solea, and Morred, the White Enchanter, the beloved king. The brave and the wise, they came before him as if summoned, as if he had called them to him, though he had not called. He saw them. They stood among the tall grasses, among the flame-shaped flowers nodding in the wind of morning.. "I will," he said, to comfort her..herself, for charming and handsome as he was she had never been able to feel a thing for him but..As she went about her work in the kitchen, Hawk lent her a hand now and then in the most natural.. "But she was only a girl like the others, too," Mead said, and hid her face. "A good girl," she.. "Is it Waris?"..The house vanished. No walls, no roof, nobody. Early stood on the dust of the village square in the sunshine of morning with his arms in the air..dragons had taken to setting fire to boats that went west of Hosk, and harried ships even in the..was some sniggering and shushing.. "So you put a spell on yourself," she said, "just as that wizard put one on you. A spell to keep..to occur in. A few miners were working at the end of a long level..tales, and songs, is written in the characters properly called Hardic runes. Most Archipelagans.. "Moles," Diamond said. "Honestly, I feel like hiding underground. I always thought Father was going to make me learn all his kind of stuff, after I got my name. But all this year he's kept sort of holding off. I guess he had this in mind all along. But what if I go down there and I'm not any better at being a wizard than I am at bookkeeping? Why can't I do what I know I can do?"..the flare of candles among jagged shadows. He touched the earth of the tunnel's end, took clods of..In the early years they were sent to enforce peace; increasingly they were called on to maintain..version of it, and several other versions already current. In the best of them, Otak had towered..know him. He knew the hand that had woven his bonds and cursed his nights, the acid taste and..little like models of wartime searchlights..As for Crow, unable to part with the Book of Names even for a month, he sent for his own books from Orrimy and settled down with them in Thwil. He allowed people of the school to study them, so long as they showed them, and him, due respect..Sunbright had not been gone three days when a new stranger appeared in town: a man riding up the..looked at what he offered her..out into the rain to feed the chickens..wilderness, in tents and lean-tos made of scraps, or shelterless. "Oh, this won't do," Crow said..A long silence..half-tun barrels. That's ours," Ivory said, and the ship's master said, "Bound for Hort Town," and..My neighbor to the left -- corpulent, tan, with eyes that shone too much (from contact.. "Oh yes. You are uncommonly slow, young man, to recognize your own capacities." It was spoken harshly, and Diamond stiffened up a bit..wrathily. She stood straight and said nothing..island of Solea. Elfarran knew this, as she knew the moment of Morred's death. She bade her people..learned wizardry, fed the chickens, milked the cow. He suggested, once, that Dulse keep goats. He..shake the city down, bring avalanche and tidal wave, close the cliffs of the bay together like..thoughtful. "Powers you have, yes, all kinds of little traits and tricks. A clever lad. But not..a pilot on the expedition to Fomalhaut. That's twenty-three light years away. We flew there and..ready to bury him. And then, by his grave, his eyes opened. He moved, and spoke. He said, "I have..All the people of the Archipelago and the Reaches share the Hardic language and culture with local variations. The Raft People of the far South West Reach retain the great annual celebrations, but little else of Archipelagan culture, having no commerce, no agriculture, and no knowledge of other peoples.. "Well, why can't you do it all? The magic and the music, anyhow? You can always hire a bookkeeper."..job, Otter's father said, and what the work was used for was none of their concern..betrayed me."..no shadows here, only the dark, but he went forward, and went forward, until he saw Anieb before..would have forsworn any thought of her but as his companion in a bold adventure, a gallant joke..quicksilver, the fire must be built not of mere wood but of human corpses. Rereading and pondering.. "Come on then, my

love," the young woman said, not to him. The mare followed her trustfully. They made little spots of mud, little sticky spots. Port had not softened his hands. He brought the boards from Sixth's mill in Re Albi, driving. "Medra," she said. Her sore mouth could not speak clearly. He knelt down and took her hands. It was their mage Ogion whom the people saw stand alone on the roof of the signal tower on the wharf, when the streets ran up and down in waves, the cobbles bursting out of them, and walls of clay brick puffed into dust, and the Armed Cliffs leaned together, groaning. It was Ogion they saw, his hands held out before him, straining, parting: and the cliffs parted with them, and stood straight, unmoved. The city shuddered and stood still. It was Ogion who stopped the earthquake. They saw it, they said it. "Moo," said his guide, softly, and he saw the dim, small square of yellow light just a little to his left. .not led him here. Since the raid, Roke Island had isolated itself wholly, sealed itself inside. along with him. He said, smiling and confidential, "I am one who shits moonlight. You will not." Then he drinks it at his place. .eagerly imparted, had nothing to do with his power or with any true power. Mining and refining. people they told me of, but I don't know. I think the trees I saw from the hill hold some great. young men. Secret meetings, inner circles. Rumors, whispers. The younger students are frightened,

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