

O FUTURO JUNTO A TI

Men chose the yoke, grudgingly, as if she still wondered how he could have let his mare stand there to be assaulted. "Are. . . are we still in the station?" "I don't know. It's why I wanted to come to Roke. To find out." The weatherworker knew his trade, at least. Sea Otter sped south; they met summer squalls and choppy seas, but never a storm or a troublesome wind. They put off and took on cargo at ports on the north shore of O, at Ilien, Leng, Kamery, and O Port, and then headed west to carry the passengers to Roke. And facing the west Ivory felt a little hollow at the pit of his stomach, for he knew all too well how Roke was guarded. He knew neither he nor the weatherworker could do anything at all to turn the Roke-wind if it blew against them. And if it did. Dragonfly would ask why? Why did it blow against them? Irioth tried to say he did not want a quarrel. He tried to say that there was work for two. He tried to say he would not take the man's work from him. But all these words burned away in the acid of the man's jealousy that would not hear them and burned them before they were spoken. He did not act like the curers who came by with remedies and spells and salves for the animals. Shaken by the intensity of that will, Tern straightened up and drew a deep breath. He looked round at the girl, Dory. She did not return his gaze, watching her mother with stolid, sullen grief. Only after the woman sank into sleep did Dory move, going to help Rush, who as a friend and neighbor had made herself useful and was gathering up blood-soaked cloths scattered by the bed. probably puts some brake on linguistic drift in daily speech), while the Hardic runes, like. Her guest came out of the house. It was a bright, misty morning, the marshes hidden by gleaming vapors. Andanden floated above the mists, a vast broken shape against the northern sky. "Listen, what I said before, that was just a joke, really. . . ." "It's dangerous," Crow said, "it's pointless," but he made no further objection. The modest, naive young man whom he had taught to read had become his unfathomable guide. but he was gone. "Keep her quiet," said the young woman, and left him holding the mare's reins in this deserted place. She returned after some time lugging a heavy bucket, and set to sponging off the mare's leg. "Get the saddle off her," she said, and her tone held the unspoken, impatient, "you fool!" Ivory obeyed, half-annoyed by this crude giantess and half-intrigued. She did not put him in mind of a flowering tree at all, but she was in fact beautiful, in a large, fierce way. The mare submitted to her absolutely. When she said, "Move your foot!" the mare moved her foot. The woman wiped her down all over, put the saddle blanket back on her, and made sure she was standing in the sun. "She'll be all right," she said. "There's a gash, but if you'll wash it with warm salt water four or five times a day, it'll heal clean, I'm sorry." She said the last honestly, though grudgingly, as if she still wondered how he could have let his mare stand there to be assaulted, and she looked straight at him for the first time. Her eyes were clear orange-brown, like dark topaz or amber. They were strange eyes, right on a level with his own. The takeoff came unexpectedly. There was no change at all in gravity, no sound reached. "It's a rare gift, to know where you need to be, before you've been to all the places you don't. He stood silent in the doorway. She sat on the stone floor near the crucible, her thin body grayish and dark like the stones. Her chin and breasts were shiny with the spittle that ran from her mouth. He thought of the spring of water that had run from the broken earth. 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. why he tried to weaken her faith in wizardry; perhaps because any weakening of her strength, her. wiped her down all over, put the saddle blanket back on her, and made sure she was standing in the. had held him. "Tell Thorion we will meet him on Roke Knoll," he said. "When he comes, we will be. with the dragon now following him, to the Old Island, Ea, the first land Segoy raised from the. the flare of candles among jagged shadows. He touched the earth of the tunnel's end, took clods of. "I can't," he said, and stopped, and went on, "I really don't want to have any dancing." "What's the matter, Emer?" said the curer, turning his thin face and strange eyes to her. comfort to talk to him even if he was no longer there, "is get into the mountain, right inside; You must not weaken, and not think, "Oh, if I just beg them to let me in, they can't refuse me." "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." Otter away. would rub out its king with half a spell. But he let Losen act the master. The pirate was a. There was an uncomfortable silence, as the Doorkeeper did not speak. At last a slight, bright-eyed. Thoreg's high priest, Intathin, opposing any truce or settlement, challenged Erreth-Akbe to a duel. most of the work. The ewe bore the digging knife patiently, her opaque, amber, slotted eyes gazing. "What's more wrong than to summon oneself back from death?" said the Namer. not be lonely. as pitiless as any wild animal, terrifying, unpredictable, yet intelligent, sometimes wiser than. "Of all the innocence," Gift said, hissing the word. "He'll skin you." She dumped a kettleful of. were gossamer to him, transparent. Nothing blurred his eyes or challenged his will as he flew over. Namer, master of the knowledge of the True Speech. They were both shy. When Medra took her hand his hand shook, and Ember, whose name was Elehal, turned away scowling. Then she touched his hand very lightly. When he stroked the sleek black flow of her hair she seemed only to endure his touch, and he stopped. When he tried to embrace her she was stiff, rejecting him. Then she turned and, fierce, hasty, awkward, seized him in her arms. It wasn't the first night, nor the first nights, they passed together that gave either of them much pleasure or ease. But they learned from each other, and came through shame and

fear into passion. Then their long days in the silence of the woods and their long, starlit nights were joy to them. "I know nothing," Irian said. She stepped forward again, facing the mage directly. Tell me who I. She looked round, and he looked up. Both knew that Gelluk had sensed something, had wakened. Otter. He presented his lower throat, the loose, heavy skin. Semiconscious, I began to scratch. "All right," I said. coals. Irioth accepted the bowl and spoon she handed him and sat down on the settle. The cat. "Of course I'll bring my band," Tarry said, "fat chance I'd miss it! You'll have every tootler in. internal quarrels, but the disintegration of the society of the Archipelago worsened as the years. On the island of Ark, and in Orrimy on Hosk, and down among the Ninety Isles, there are tales about a man who came seeking for a land where people remembered the justice of the kings and the honor of wizards, and he called that land Morred's Isle. There's no knowing if these stories are about Medra, since he went under many names, seldom if ever calling himself Otter any more. Gelluk's fall had not brought Losen down. The pirate king had other wizards in his pay, among them a man called Early, who would have liked to find the young upstart who defeated his master Gelluk. And Early had a good chance of tracing him. Losen's power stretched all across Havnor and the north of the Inmost Sea, growing with the years; and the Hound's nose was as keen as ever. When he was Gelluk's prentice and assistant, he had encouraged his master in the study of the lore of Way, finding himself free while Gelluk was off doting on his quicksilver. But Gelluk's abrupt fate had shaken him. There was something mysterious in it, some element or some person missing. Summoning the useful Hound to help him, Early had made a very thorough inquiry into what happened. Where Gelluk was, of course, was no mystery. Hound had tracked him straight to a scar in a hillside, and said he was buried deep under there. Early had no wish to exhume him. But the boy who had been with him, Hound could not track: could not say whether he was under that hill with Gelluk, or had got clean away. He had left no spell traces as the mage did, said Hound, and it had rained very hard all the night after, and when Hound thought he had found the boy's tracks, they were a woman's; and she was dead. "She is," said Rush. "Like her mother and her mother's mother. Let us in, Dory, or me at least, to speak to her." The girl went back in for a moment, and Rush said to Medra, "It's consumption her mother's dying of. No healer could cure her. But she could heal the scrofula, and touch for pain. A wonder she was, and Dory bade fair to follow her." wonders if I might spend a month at home this summer." Irian stood silent too, but her hope sank down, replaced by a sense of shame and utter. political center of the country. Erreth-Akbe's visit seems to have coincided with the final shift. Where he went then, the songs don't tell. They say only that he wandered, "he wandered long from land to land." If he went along the coast of the Great Isle, in many of those villages he might have found a midwife or a wise woman or a sorcerer who knew the sign of the Hand and would help him; but with Hound on his track, most likely he left Havnor as soon as he could, shipping as a crewman on a fishing boat of the Ebavnor Straits or a trader of the Inmost Sea. practice, though even then it would never lose its strangeness. Highdrake's mastery of spells and. the island, a sea no boat could venture out in. willow, green in spring and bare in winter; there were dark firs, and cedar, and a tall evergreen. to obey me!" 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. Things came round if you could wait for them, she thought. "I'll set em out for you," she said. "No," she said, "only me... But there's a great deal of seeking and finding to be done in the. in spells of protection, endurance, peace. They saw the Rule of Roke established, though never so. mostly older students; there were five or six wizard's staffs among the crowd, and the Master. his hand in his mind only, as when he played the mental harp, then indeed he touched her. He felt. wouldn't have left the greatest of all the lore-books among boors who'd make thatch of it! Take us. Silence bowed his rough, thoughtful head. the hearths in Thwil Town. They listened to the wind blow and the rain beat or the silence of the. carter to the forester. "Sweet as new butter, he is." Golden, unaware of being sweet, thought only. growl, like a bear. A moment later a thunderclap rolled off the hidden upper slopes of Gont. "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." "Mars?" "Enough of that, my dear," Dulse said, laying his hand on it. "Come now. No wonder I kept thinking. perceiving the school as a threat to the uncontrolled individual power of the mages, came with a. watched something just out of sight, around the corner, elsewhere. singly or several at a time from their metal lairs and speeding away, always in the same direction. Diamond. It tickled him a little, though, to see his boy teaching tricks to the witch-child. founded a school on Roke as a center where they might gather and share knowledge, clarify the. walked for hours in silence. In the summer midday the woods were silent. No bird sang. The leaves. cheek in a butterfly kiss, dark lashes. He looked up startled and did not know what had touched. in the morning light. Gift thought it was like seeing a prince ride oft, like something out of a. Patterner here. I'd like to learn more about your name." He nodded to the other two mages and was. was weakened then." For Golden looked on the Art Magic with genuine humility as something quite beyond him -- not a mere toy, such as music or tale-telling, but a practical business, which his business could never quite equal. And he was, though he wouldn't have put it that way, afraid of wizards. A bit contemptuous of sorcerers, with their sleights and illusions and gibble-gabble, but afraid of wizards. The Kargs are deeply resistant to writing of any kind, considering it to be sorcerous and wicked. They keep complex accounts and records in weavings of different colors and weights of yarn, and are expert mathematicians, using base twelve; but only since the Godkings came to power have they

employed any kind of symbolic writing, and that sparingly. Bureaucrats and tradesmen of the Empire adapted the Hardic runes to Kargish, with some simplifications and additions, for purposes of business and diplomacy. But Kargish priests never learn writing; and many Kargs still write every Hardic rune with a light stroke through it, to cancel out the sorcery that lurks in it..it is said, that word is used to mean both wizard and dragon.. "A cigarette. What -- you don't smoke?" "I'll show you. So help me!"..thirties, with a blunt face and a pleasant look, dressed plain, though the cob that stood behind..the practices of sorcerers and witches. Women's powers were particularly distrusted and maligned..Slavery was common to many of these states, and a stricter social caste system and gender differentiation ("division of labor") than in the Archipelago..flowed out of it..After Morred, seven more kings and queens ruled from Enlad, and the realm increased steadily in..she still scowled, sometimes she smiled, but she did not laugh. When she could, she went to the..in the household of the Lord of Ark. Not a poor man's son, but not a child of much account. And..you in ivory. I'm sorry if I'm meddling in your business. Sir." She flung out the door with two..are to help me, and if I am to teach you, you must try a little harder. I think you know how." He..And beyond that, nothing. There had been illusions, little spells, pebbles that turned to..He had half-consciously dreaded that Diamond would triumph over him, asserting his power right.."Somebody's been coming around," he said, incredulous that she could turn against him. "Who's been..and mills and business, and Golden told him so. "Singing time is over, son," he said. "You must." "No need," said the man like a falcon. "I will." And he said, "Irioth.."playing and delaying. But now that I've come, you serve me, and have nothing to be afraid of. And..like all women, she was inclined to babble and gossip, and indiscriminate in her friendships. The..Gelluk stopped and said nothing for some time, thinking, his face excited. Otter glimpsed the images in his mind: great fires blazing, burning sticks with hands and feet, burning lumps that screamed as green wood screams in the fire.."If you ask me to, I'll talk," the young man said, so earnest, so willing to deny his whole nature at Dulse's request that the wizard had to laugh.."Stop," I grumbled. "Any more apologizing and I'll really feel all that time."..I followed her.."He won't come here?"..Irioth came up onto the doorstep. He did not go in, but spoke in the open door. "Master San, it's about the cattle you have there between the rivers. I can go to them today." He did not know why he said this. It was not what he had meant to say..greeting people, I no longer crushed their hands. That was easy. But, unfortunately, the least..he'd had a dirt floor it hadn't mattered, but now he had a wooden floor, like a lord or a merchant..me; a flat tabletop had begun to descend, making a kind of desk, but it was a bed that I wanted. I..Licky had told him that it was the fumes of the metal rising from heated ore that sickened and..Telio, in the twilight, beside the wall of stones..name written in the dust by the falling rain. Ged could force the dragon Yevaud to obey him..The one with a voice like a deep-toned bell looked at her too, and spoke to her with a plain, kind..to other men than women and children are. We might have fifty witches here and they'll pay little..had already died away, but a ruffling, a roughening, a shudder, again, and again..her bed. Nearing the house, he heard crockery breaking. The father, the drunkard, came wobbling..sleek creature was the mortal mind; and where the stream passes the hill west of Samory, the otter..He saw her smile, but she was also hesitant, and after a while she said, "Well, you're welcome, sir, but I have to ask, can you pay a little?"

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