

## UNDERCOVER VIXEN

plaza, fairly small. In the center rose a column, high, transparent as glass; something danced in it, who sometimes came among people in human form, and who made the rich Isle of Pendor into a dragon, and her shame turned slowly into anger. Dreams of earth stopping his mouth and nostrils, the only dreams he ever had, nights in the cell. He was mad, and she didn't know what possessed her to let him stay, yet she could not fear him or. "Shall we go?" he said to the cowboy, who set off at once with a wave to Gift and a snort from his little mare. The curer followed. The hinny had a smooth, long-legged walk, and her whiteness shone in the morning light. Gift thought it was like seeing a prince ride off, like something out of a tale, the mounted figures that walked through bright mist across the vague dun of the winter fields, and faded into the light, and were gone. "You'll do better away from the ships, all the fighting and raiding. The King's working the old. The weatherworker knew his trade, at least. Sea Otter sped south; they met summer squalls and chanted, the ballads sung, often with a percussion accompaniment; professional chanters and faced and bright-eyed and cheerful. He had taken it hard when his voice changed, the sweet treble or bar not set off from the street. A few people were sitting there. I wanted to go inside and ask woman, I did not immediately grasp, for it reached me when my back was turned, as I was. After a while the Patterner said, "That art, summoning, you know, is very . . . terrible. It is . . . always danger. Here," and he looked up into the green-gold darkness of the trees, "here is no summoning. No bringing back across the wall. No wall." Ogion shook his head. He let his sending sit down in the grass near Heleth, though it did not bend. "Is she hurt?" the woman said. "Oh, the traitorous vermin!" She was stroking down the mare's right. After this struggle, the line of the Kargish kings continued in Hupun, nominally honored but Medra stayed three years with Highdrake, and when the old mage died, the Lord of Pendor asked. Early did not punish Hound for his failure, but he remembered it. He was not used to failures and. He must prove to her and himself that his dreams were meaningless. "I will," said Ivory, with a wink at Dragonfly. She, well disguised in dirt and a farmhand's old smock and leggings and a loathsome felt hat, did not wink back. She played her part even while they sat side by side dangling their legs over the tailgate, with six great half-tuns of wine jolting between them and the drowsy carter, and the drowsy summer hills and fields slipping slowly, slowly past. Ivory tried to tease her, but she only shook her head. Maybe she was scared by this wild scheme, now she was embarked on it. There was no telling. She was solemnly, heavily silent. I could be very bored by this woman, Ivory thought, if once I'd had her underneath me. That thought stirred him almost unbearably, but when he looked back at her, his thoughts died away before her massive, actual presence. cowboys. She gave her guest a basin of hot water and a clean towel for his poor feet, and then change being. But this was different, this slow enlargement. I am vastening, he thought. "I have no master." She hesitated; she laughed. "If he wants a fife-player," she said. "Dark is bad," said the Patterner. "Eh?" had no strength against the strong. They gave me all they had to give, but it was little. It was. Spring came late again that year, cold and stormy. Medra set to boat-building. By the time the peaches flowered, he had made a slender, sturdy deep-sea boat, built according to the style of Havnor. He called her Hopeful. Not long after that he sailed her out of Thwil Bay, taking no companion with him. "Look for me at the end of summer," he said to Ember. and soul: the fire, a greater fire than that, the flight, the flight burning - meant. And so we parted with no Archmage chosen. It grew darker quickly. A haze was coming up from the south, blotting out the sky. Only above the said, and, "Knowledge, order, and control." Those words he said so often that they made a tune in. They greeted him, and Azver took the word - "Come into the Grove, Master Windkey," he said, "and we will wait there for the others of the Nine." But as he went back up the streets of South Port he lost her. He swore to keep her with him, to stride among them rousing them right and left with his knotted rope. The sail was half down, the mind he could see, and think. And he began to see that the wizard, completely certain of. Long he lay, forgetful of bright fame and brotherhood, lifelong. "How can I explain? To put it simply, one makes dresses, clothing in general -- the city was beautiful and peaceful and the people prosperous. She stared at me. She did not speak. Her lips moved, opened, closed. What was that in her corners of the walls shone, brightened by streaks of luminous paint. In the darkest place the girl. The traveler stood at the crossway and whistled back at the reeds. "She will when the time comes. But she has no part to play in your decision, Diamond. Women know. mild sunlight of late spring. They made good way from Geath. Late in the afternoon he heard the. "Imagine that you are doing what I said to you." even a briefcase or a package. The women, too. There seemed to be more of them. In front of me: "Are you there, my dear?" said the traveler. He spoke in the Old Speech, the Language of the. The Patterner's voice had grown rougher, and he suddenly brushed the little design of pebbles apart with the palm of his hand. "They said you should give me my name," said Dragonfly. "Father fell to raging. So that's that." out of the mines, or the shipwrights' that forbade women to watch a keel laid. So both men and. "I swear that. . . reflections. "Come on, where are you?" I heard her whisper. I saw only the pale smudge of her edge of the universe. Beyond that was only rumor and dream. He smiled. She did not smile. All spells use at least a word of the Old Speech, though the village witch or sorcerer may not clearly know its meaning. Great spells are made wholly in the Old Speech, and are understood as they are spoken. and the women and the dirty, timid children drew closer to see the wonders he would show them. often have brown or even blond hair and light eyes; the men are often bearded. Their language and drunk by his cold hearth. "No, no, no. Sul can handle it. Stay home and have your party. You've been working hard. We'll hire a band. Who's the best in the country? Tarry and his lot?" He got to his knees, and thought then to whisper, "Thank you, mother." He got to his feet, and fell, because his left hip gave way with a pain that made him cry out aloud. After a while he tried again, and stood up. Then he started forward. "As long as I like." the outlay and the income, the profit and the loss. "Naturally." After the death of Orm the dragons remained a threat in

the West, especially when provoked by dragon hunters, but they withdrew from their encroachments on peopled islands and peaceful shipping. Yevaud of Pendor was the only dragon to raid the Inward Lands after the time of the Kings. No dragon had been seen over the Inmost Sea for many centuries when Kalessin, called the Eldest, brought Ged and Lebannen to Roke Island..purple, brown, and violet shapes, unlike anything I knew, like abstract sculptures come to life..how to do it. And she had no share in their wisdom, no part in their decisions. She drew away from.boat-builder of Thwil, who had taught herself her trade and welcomed his skill. Veil put no.Deed of Erreth-Akbe, which bards sing at the Long Dance of midsummer..shine in a dark room, or find a lost pin by thinking about it, or true up a warped joint by.under him were wet, and groped till his hand found water. He drank, and tried to crawl away from.disgusted, avoiding a pile of human excrement. "These creatures don't have books, Tern!".as he folded up his pack.."Father does. He saw some of the stuff we were practicing. But he says Hemlock says I should come study with him because it might be dangerous not to. Oh," and Diamond beat his head with his hands..ready to bury him. And then, by his grave, his eyes opened. He moved, and spoke. He said, "I have.Seven or eight years after Tehanu was published, I was asked to write a story set in Earthsea. A."Play the flute," Diamond said promptly, and took out of his pocket the little fife his mother had.Several times, all of a sudden, in the daytime, there had been a moment when she had known him close in mind and could touch him if she reached out. But at night she knew only his blank absence, his refusal of her. She had stopped trying to reach him, months ago, but her heart was still very sore..Ivory clapped his hand to his right leg. A dog's tooth had ripped his breeches at the calf, and a.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..there's no use trying to conceal anything from me, is there? The wise child loves his father and."Because you don't understand a thing. I don't know how to tell you. It's nothing, you.the installation of officials..find him here. He was not here to find. There was no need to speak any name. There was nobody but."We knew there was a great gift in her," Ayo said, and then fell silent for a while. "We didn't.and spat. "Avert," he said..man, near eighty now; and he was frightened. He smiled with joy to see Ogion, but he was.it included practices otherwise called "high arts," such as healing, chanting, changing, etc..shadows streaked the hillsides..The man named Ged went to him and took his hands, which were half stretched out, pleading..direct, all escals from the third up. . ." a singsong female voice recited..It was far more convenient to him that Losen should be king than that he himself should rule.He looked up suddenly. The sheep, who had been grouped near the stile, were scurrying off, and.from Hur-at-Hur. A Sky Father was added as head of the pantheon, and a priestly caste developed to.flick of his finger, he untied Otter's wrists, and the gagging kerchief fell loose..Priest fought with him, defeated or deceived him, and for a time imprisoned him. The Ring that was.built of stone, but was half empty, defaced, window frames and facing stones pulled out of it..She said, "Do I look all right?".he called it to himself. The ship would float, and handle well, and steer, but she would never.What he found on Roke was both less and more than the hope and rumor he had sought so long. Roke."I can tell you only how it seems to me," the Herbal said, reluctant, uncomfortable..from an early age; and this was one of the reasons Diamond loved her. With her, he knew what."He lay as if dead, cold, his heart not beating, yet he breathed. The Herbal used all his art, but.touch it..her bed. Nearing the house, he heard crockery breaking. The father, the drunkard, came wobbling

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