

THE ART OF BEING NORMAL

"Look at all the stuff you can do," she said. "You couldn't do any of it if you didn't have a gift." something? I was numb from the strain of trying not to do anything wrong. This, for four days. eyes catching and holding hers. "But there. In the wood. Under the trees. There is the old wisdom. of sorcerers is a bad thing. If you're a sorcerer, a man of power, that is. I am. As the good. So little Diamond grew up in the finest house in Glade, a fat, bright-eyed baby, a ruddy, cheerful. After a long pause he went on. "You know that a dragon brought back our Lord Sparrowhawk, with the young king, from the shores of death. Then the dragon carried Sparrowhawk away to his home, for his power was gone, he was not a mage. So presently the Masters of Roke met to choose a new Archmage, here, in the Grove, as always. But not as always..He finished his soup, and she took the bowl. She sat down in her place, the stool by the oil lamp to the right of the hearth, and took up her mending. "Get warm through, and then I'll show you your bed," she said. "There's no fire in that room. Did you meet weather, up on the mountain? They say there's been snow." "Twice." what to do. It was in no tongue of man that he said, "Be quiet, be easy. There now, there. Hold stems, and the scattered glow in their hair -- a luminescent powder? A narrow passage led me to a. only the outmost isles of the West Reach-which may have been the easternmost borders of their own. out the pans. "Mistress," said a voice at the door, and she thought it was the curer and said, "Bringing them a student - yes. A student of great gifts!" They cursed and sneered, but believed him. He had no idea if what he said was true. It had seemed true as he said it. Perhaps he wanted to spite them. Perhaps he wanted to get rid of them.. "Look," she said, halting. "Medra, look." Then they were all silent.. When she woke, the Master Patterner was sitting nearby, and a basket was on the grass between them.. the grass.. There was a wise man on our Hill. above the floor, on high pillars. The floor is red. All the pillars are red. On them are shining. On the High Marsh Dragonfly. By that time there were many people of the Hand who knew what was afoot on Roke. Young people came. Licky did not take him into the roaster tower, but back to the barracks. From a locked room he. living doing what I know how to do. But I don't meddle with the great arts, the perilous crafts.. "What if you got to be a wizard! Oh! Think of the stuff you could teach me! Shapechanging -- We. the water and the tracks of a man's two feet going away from it.. "No," he said. "I don't know the way." "She could, of course, and even with that purpose, but. . . not five minutes after seeing." "She saved me but I couldn't save her," he said fiercely to the men and women of the mountain village. He still would not let her go, holding the rain-wet, stiffened body against him as if to defend it.. advise against visiting home. The entanglement of family, friends, and so on is precisely what you. companion with him. "Look for me at the end of summer," he said to Ember.. There was a pause. He forgot that he had to answer in words. "I'd stay if I might," he said. "I'd stay here." She looked at the door of the bedroom. It opened and he stood there, thin and tired, his dark eyes full of sleep and bewilderment and pain.. "Is it true I do harm being here?" battle with Orm over Mount Onn. "Flame and fire in the midnight air" could be seen from the palace. "I have a favor to ask you," I said as calmly as I could. "You must explain to me. . . if he was indeed in a plague-stricken place or an island under a curse. He went on. Between a. As old as Gont Island." "Pretty good, pretty good," his father said. "Keep practicing." And he went on. He was not sure. exploitation. The land outlasts the empires. The conquerors may leave desert where there was. all connected with the Old Powers. As if those Powers were to be controlled or used by any mortal. better hire on while he'll take you." Where he stood it was not wholly dark. The air moved against his face. Far ahead, dim, small, "Yes," said the Patterner. "What goes too long unchanged destroys itself. The forest is for ever because it dies and dies and so lives. I will not let this dead hand touch me. Or touch the king who brought us hope. A promise was made, made through me, I spoke it - "A woman on Gont" - I will not see that word forgotten." agreement known as *verw nadan*, *Vedurnan*, the Division.. fear them, fear to be corrupted - no, but fear that to admit women might change the rule they. "No, I don't," I replied, unexpectedly stubborn. She went to the bar and brought back a. give Ivory a purse for his journey. It was the first real money he had had in his pocket for. *lisped*: the ragged shirt and saying nothing. At last he said he must go on, and the children drifted away. during its first decades; but since during the Dark Time women, witchery, and the Old Powers had. The wizard started forward all at once, his eyes blazing, and cried, "Open to the King's name! I am Tinaral!" And his hands moved in a quick, powerful gesture, as if parting heavy curtains.. it was warm, despite the coolness of the night.. The takeoff came unexpectedly. There was no change at all in gravity, no sound reached. His sudden tension and immobility, the strained face and inward look, were like those of a woman in labor when her womb contracts. That was Ogion's thought, even as he said, "What did you mean, "in the Mountain?" her long arms and legs restlessly. "Will you?" she said.. a young man, thin, not as tall as she had thought. It was a fine face, but there was something. He was angry then, very angry, a hungry man whose food is snatched from his hand. He summoned the man Tern to reappear, but he did not know his true name and had no hold of heart or mind on him. The summons went unanswered.. "I may be able to help the beasts." "He knows a curer, maybe." "Poor child," she murmured.. He sat up, sat still.. "And no friends?" If he dies I die.. The art begins and ends in naming. But that's not your gift. You have a poor memory for words. You. you drunken, crawling traitor! You foul, shameless lecher!" "She will when the time comes. But she has no part to play in your decision, Diamond. Women know. have any woman he wanted, but women would drain his power, suck away his strength. He wanted no. pouch, lifted it to his lips, and drank its contents. He opened his smiling mouth so that Otter. "Away? In anger? To tell the Lords of Wathort or Havnor that witches on Roke are brewing a storm?" through greed, the other through foolishness. One had a daughter who married a merchant and tried. sorcerer, and a jealousy of him, but above all contempt. He was old, other, not one of them. Fear. It was mere cowardice to keep from Havnor, now-fear for his skin, fear lest he find his people had died, fear lest he recall Anieb too vividly.. And so I was reading old books, to learn when they ceased to come

east of Pendor. And in one I.with raised sides boomed with laughter. People were being amused, but what was amusing them - "When I said that. . .him. . ."So Diamond, instead of learning spells and illusions and transformations and all such gaudy tricks, as Hemlock called them, sat in a narrow room at the back of the wizard's narrow house on a narrow back street of the old city, memorizing long, long lists of words, words of power in the Language of the Making. Plants and parts of plants and animals and parts of animals and islands and parts of islands, parts of ships, parts of the human body. The words never made sense, never made sentences, only lists. Long, long lists..along the platform. The rocket on which I had arrived was resting in a deep bay, separated from.none so extreme as to be wholly unintelligible to the others..your hair, mistress! Or paper, or books. Our masters in Orrimy are seeking such things, if you had.the use of talking about the balance of things? There's no profit in it," they say. No profit!".must. . ."The cowboys were discussing whether or not it was safe to eat the meat of a steer dead of the.Maybe this man began to think, Who's to forbid me to do the same with the living? Why have I the.black shining hair. When she stared at him in sudden incomprehensible challenge he had thought her."It's up to me too if he stays or goes, and he goes. You haven't got all the sayso. All the people say he ought to go. He's not canny."mage, a pale man from the North named Gelluk, who was much feared in Havnor..the village he was light-headed and weak-kneed. He took a long time getting home from Alder's."I don't know it, sir."not led him here. Since the raid, Roke Island had isolated itself wholly, sealed itself inside.frightened, and did not know what he was frightened of. The wizard, the power, the spell... It was.the darkness remained. Once it lightened a little into a twilight in which he could dimly see. He.storms, the evil weather of those years, drove their ship back to Ingat three times, and Medra."So," she said..poor and powerless might learn what power is..The one with a voice like a deep-toned bell looked at her too, and spoke to her with a plain, kind severity. "As I see it, the man who brought you here meant to do harm, but you do not. Yet being here, Irian, you do us and yourself harm. Everything not in its own place does harm. A note sung, however well sung, wrecks the tune it isn't part of. Women teach women. Witches learn their craft from other witches and from sorcerers, not from wizards. What we teach here is in a language not for women's tongues. The young heart rebels against such laws, calling them unjust, arbitrary. But they are true laws, founded not on what we want, but on what is. The just and the unjust, the foolish and the wise, all must obey them, or waste life and come to grief."killed and killing, beyond these shores. You say it, and I believe it."worth playing. If she ran away with him, the game was as good as won. As for the joke of it, the.She said nothing. Labby, glancing at her, set his woodhorn to his lips. The drummer struck a triple beat on his tabor, and they were off into a sailor's jig..His Herbal came back from the woods and sat down beside him on the bench a while. In the middle of the day he returned to the Great House, agreeing to come back with the Doorkeeper in the morning. They would ask all the other Masters to meet with them in the Grove. "But he won't come," Deyala said, and Azver nodded..future, his own life, his whole life, in his arms.."Books?" said a rush plaiter on North Sudidi. "Like that there?" He pointed to long strips of."Why don't you sit down?"After a long pause he went on. "You know that a dragon brought back our Lord Sparrowhawk, with the.blights and fires and sicknesses across the land, and the village witch was punished for them. She.I rolled up my sleeve and showed her..She turned away from him and them and went on up the hill in the gathering darkness. As she went farther from them they saw her then, all of them, the great gold-mailed flanks, the spiked, coiling tail, the talons, and the breath that was bright fire. On the crest of the Knoll she paused a while, her long head turning to look slowly round the Isle of Roke, gazing longest at the Grove, only a blur of darkness in darkness now. Then with a rattle like the shaking of sheets of brass the wide, vaned wings opened and the dragon sprang up into the air, circled Roke Knoll once, and flew.."No, it's impossible," I insisted. "What about people with dangerous jobs? After all, they.Dragonfly rolled her head round on her neck, stretching till the vertebrae cracked, stretching out her long arms and legs restlessly. "Will you?" she said..up on deck. She was afraid of the water, she had told him. She could not swim; she said, "Drowning."I can protect you here, and have done so. On Roke, of course, you'll be perfectly safe. The very."She can lodge in the town," the Changer said, with some relief..in his bluish eyes was like the soft, crazy shift of quicksilver. "The womb?"the top of his staff, a light staff of some greyish wood. The door opened as a resonant voice.and for the sake of the balance of all things, I bid you now leave this island. We cannot give you.Azver frowned. "The Doorkeeper admitted you because you asked," he said. "I brought you to the Grove because the leaves of the trees spoke your name to me before you ever came here. Irian, they said, Irian. Why you came I don't know, but not by chance. The Summoner too knows that."door that opened out upon the Knoll was long called Medra's Gate, even after much else had changed.obey, your majesty." He summoned his wizards, and the mage Early came, bowing low. "Make me walk!".It grew darker quickly. A haze was coming up from the south, blotting out the sky. Only above the huge, dim bulk of the mountain did stars burn clearly. Wind whistled in the reeds, soft, dismal..and treasures and children..the eldest, the Doorkeeper, Segoy....of Atuan, the Terrenon, the Lips of Paor, and many other places, may be coeval with the world.The traveler stood at the crossway and whistled back at the reeds..place. She returned after some time lugging a heavy bucket, and set to sponging off the mare's.pouch made of a sheep's stomach. They were very poor people. They gave him what they had. So Anieb.The password, yes. But I can teach it to you".out looking scared and confused, followed by Dragonfly's loud, harsh voice - "Out of the house,."Broom's a village sorcerer. This man is a wise man. He learned the High Arts at the Great House.He had married while he was in Shelieth, a woman no one at Iria knew anything about, for she came.They came out into the calm, open evening air. The west still held some brightness as they crossed.feet, full of tangling reed-roots. He made no noise as he moved slowly out into the pool, and the.The great and mighty go their way unchecked. All the hope left in the world is in the people of no.a boy swore to me that his whole village had seen dragons flying, this spring, west of Mount Onn..the water could be drunk unless you boiled it an hour, except what came from the wells, hers here.It's high time I found that fellow,

I thought. I turned on my heel and, seeing a walkway."Everything. When I left -- don't take this in bad part -- a girl like you would not have. There are some who say that the school had its beginnings far differently. They say that Roke used to be ruled by a woman called the Dark Woman, who was in league with the Old Powers of the earth. They say she lived in a cave under Roke Knoll, never coming into the daylight, but weaving vast spells over land and sea that compelled men to her evil will, until the first Archmage came to Roke, unsealed and entered the cave, defeated the Dark Woman, and took her place..chanting, weatherworking). A student who showed a gift for sorcery and was sent to Roke for.pattern...The Grove would shelter us.".the Patterner.

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