***A Wizard of Earth Sea***

***Chapter 3***

***Summary:***

* Ged eventually finds the school for wizards. But he can't enter the school until he gives the doorkeeper his true name, so he complies. Also, a shadow seems to follow him.
* Ged meets Archmage Nemmerle, and has a moment of enlightenment where it seems like the birds and the water in the fountain are talking to him. Which is better than anything we ever experienced meeting a new principal or teacher.
* Ged reads Nemmerle the letter Ogion sent, which says that Ged will be the greatest wizard from Gont. (You know, no pressure.)
* Nemmerle mumbles to himself and Ged suddenly feels as if he's alone among shadows in a desert. Let's just say it: the School for Wizards is a weird place.
* At least one thing is normal for a school: not all the students there get along. Ged gets a tour from an older student named Jasper and they're both a little rude to each other. (Ged thinks Jasper's mocking him, so he acts rudely back.)
* Ged and Jasper run into a nice student named Vetch who joins them for the rest of the tour.
* The tour includes the usual places for a boarding school – you eat here, sleep over there, read books there.
* But there are also magical places. For instances, there's the Immanent Grove, which is a forest that you can't come close to. (It almost seems like Le Guin is making a joke about the words "[**immanent**](http://www.wordnik.com/words/immanent)" and "[**imminent**](http://www.wordnik.com/words/imminent).")
* Also, there's Roke Knoll, which is a grassy hill where magic is particularly strong.
* Jasper and Vetch demonstrate their illusions, and Jasper asks Ged to do some Gontish magic. Now, Ged doesn't really know magic that's quite as cool as their stuff, so he pretends to be above such silly illusions.
* And since Ged now feels like a fool, he really hates Jasper now. Luckily, Vetch is a nice guy, and they hang out.
* Ged studies hard, partly in order to beat Jasper, which is the best reason for wanting to be a master magician.
* He studies with the Nine Masters of Roke (though you may notice that this list doesn't actually add up to nine in this chapter):
* (1) The Master Chanter teaches history (which is in song form, of course).
* (2) The Master Windkey teaches weatherworking.
* (3) The Master Herbal teaches, well, herbs. And healing.
* (4) The Master Hand teaches tricks and illusions.
* Ged is good at illusions, but he wants to really change one thing into another.
* The Master Hand gives Ged a long speech that Ged doesn't pay attention to, but that you should (3.57). The gist of that speech is basically this: to really change a thing, you have to change its true name; but such a change may upset balance, so you really have to know what you're doing.
* (5) The Master Namer lives in a far tower and teaches the students the true names of things.
* See, in this world, everything has its own name – so, there's a name for water, but there's also a name for each sea and each harbor, etc. And you have to know something's true name to exert some power over it. Which is why people don't like giving up their true names.
* Also, dragons speak this language, so you know it's awesome.
* Like everyone else, the Master Namer reminds Ged that balance is important, but we're not sure he's really learned that lesson just yet.
* Which is strange, since he's so smart at all his other lessons. He's so good with names that he gets to leave early. Sweet.
* On his walk back to school, he sleeps in the rain, as Ogion taught him to.
* In the morning, he discovers an otak curled up in his cloak to stay warm. An otak is something like a flying squirrel (at least it sounds like that to us), and Ged keeps it as a pet.
* He names it Hoeg, which is Old Speech for "otak" – so it's a bit like naming a dog "Dog." Maybe he'll get better at naming pets when he's a master magician …
* Back at school, it's a holiday and Ged is happy. At least, he is until Jasper shows off some illusion for the Archmage's guests. That super annoys Ged. And you wouldn't like him when he's annoyed.

***Brief Summary:***

Ged arrives in Roke and asks some townspeople where he can find the Warden of the School on Roke. Each time he asks a new townsperson for direction, they respond with a riddle-like answer leaving Ged with no more information than when he started. Finally he knocks on a door and the person answering tells him he has found the school. Ged tries, unsuccessfully, to enter the door. The doorkeeper asks Ged for his name. Although it is not the norm to say one’s own name unless it is a life or death situation, Ged tells the doorkeeper his name and at last, he can enter.

Ged is left alone waiting in the innermost room of the House of Wise. Suddenly, there is a man in the room with him, the Archmage Nemmerle. Ged reads the letter Ogion has given him to the Archmage. The letter states Ged will be the greatest wizard of Gont. The Archmage mumbles in a strange language and then all at once the Archmage tells Ged to run along. And just as quickly as he appeared, he disappears, leaving Ged alone.

A young man named Jasper appears and tells Ged he is there to show him around the school and answer any questions Ged might have. Ged tells Jasper he is called Sparrowhawk. Jasper shows Ged through the Room of Shelves and Hearth Hall, to Ged’s new bedroom in the South Tower and finally to the dining hall where Ged sees a hundred or so young men eating including a young man named Vetch.

After their meal, Jasper and Vetch take Ged into the nearby town of Thwil to get Ged acquainted with the village. The people and the village, so close to sorcery, seem strange to Ged. The villagers talk in riddles and do not seem bothered or affected by seeing magic. Finally the boys make it to Roke Knoll where Jasper asks Ged to show them some magic. The boys show them their magic but Ged tells them he won’t do magic because sorcery is not a game to Gontish sorcerers. Later that night Vetch visits Ged in his room and they talk about Gont and Vetch’s home in the East Reach. Ged learns Vetch will soon be made sorcerer. From that night on Vetch and Ged are friends.

Soon Ged is throwing himself into his studies. Ged learns fast and soon becomes one of the best students. One day Ged asks his favorite teacher, Master Hand, how to make a Changing spell stick so when he changes a rock into a diamond it will remain a diamond forever. Master Hand tells Ged it can be done but not until he knows what is good and what is evil because changing the true nature of something, even something as small as a rock, changes the world. Changing something permanently, changing its true name, can be very dangerous. Soon after this conversation with his Master, Ged has another run-in with Jasper. Their discussion leaves Ged more determined than ever to show Jasper up.

When the winter comes, Ged is sent to Isolate Tower where he lives by himself with Master Namer and learns to master the sea. After a year, Ged is sent back to the school. On his way back he falls asleep and when he wakes up he finds an otak sleeping in his cloak. Although they are dangerous beasts, Ged speaks the otak’s true name and asks it if it wants to come with him. With the otak on his shoulder Ged returns to the school and sees his friend Vetch.

That night the Lord and Lady of O visit the school and many of the young pupils are entranced by the Lady’s beauty, including Ged. Jasper does tricks of illusion for the Lady who pleads for him to come back to O-tokne with her and the Lord. Everyone is amused by Jasper except for Ged; envious, he tells himself he could have evoked a better illusion than Jasper.

***Brief Analysis:***

Ged has made it to the School and Roke. Almost immediately upon his arrival he creates a rival—Jasper. From the moment they meet there seems to be a tension between Jasper and Ged. Because Jasper is the son of a Lord, Ged feels Jasper is always looking down on him, mocking him. As time goes on the rivalry only seems to deepen, especially since Jasper is one of the only students in the school that does not seem to be in awe of Ged and his quick mastery of magic.

During his time at the school both Masters Hand and Namer give important warnings to Ged. He is taught valuable lesson of the deep power and danger of magic, of the responsibility a wizard has when using magic. Ged is told he must know the difference between good and evil before certain, very powerful, magic can be done. It is not clear whether or not these lessons and warnings actually resonate with him.

Almost immediately upon his return to the school from this time with Master Namer, Ged find himself annoyed with, even envious of, Jasper. It seems all his learning about evil and darkness cannot yet help Ged manage his feelings of anger, jealously and pride.

***Critical Study:***

[Ged](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/A-Wizard-of-Earthsea/character-analysis/#Ged) arrives in the town of Thwil on Roke where the townspeople talk in riddles. When he finds the school, the Master Doorkeeper tells him, "Enter if you can." Ged has to ask for help, but he enters. Inside, Ged encounters Archmage Nemmerle, and he has a moment of deep understanding. Nemmerle welcomes Ged, and Nemmerle's raven squawks at him. A fellow student named [Jasper](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/A-Wizard-of-Earthsea/character-analysis/#Jasper) gives Ged a tour. Ged eats dinner with Jasper and another student named [Vetch](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/A-Wizard-of-Earthsea/character-analysis/#Vetch). Vetch becomes a friend, but Jasper becomes a rival.

Ged studies hard to prove to Jasper and the rest that he is indeed a great wizard. After a month he can already best many of his fellows. Ged is eager to go beyond mere illusion, but Master Hand warns him of the danger of using magic that affects the balance of the world. In the winter Ged goes to study at the Isolate Tower with the Master Namer for one year, learning the true name of things. On Ged's way back to school he falls asleep in a rainstorm and wakes up with an otak curled up in his cloak. The otak comes with him, and Ged enjoys the community of his fellows during a festival. Jasper teases Ged for his "rat," and Ged is envious of Jasper's talent for illusion.

[Ged](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/A-Wizard-of-Earthsea/character-analysis/#Ged) is beginning to learn the limits of his own power. For example, he understands he has to ask the Master Doorkeeper for help in order to enter the school because he cannot do it on his own. However, Ged still believes a master wizard is "powerful enough to do what he pleased." Ged dismisses the Master Hand's warning about not shaking the balance of the world. "Surely," he muses, a learned wizard can "drive back darkness with his own light."

The wizard school at Roke is foundational for Ged in many ways. Not only does it teach him the many practical and academic subjects a wizard must know, it also makes him part of a community. [Vetch](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/A-Wizard-of-Earthsea/character-analysis/#Vetch) becomes his dear friend, and Ged becomes fond of the masters as well. It is also during this time that Ged acquires his animal familiar, or alter-ego, the otak, which is something like a flying squirrel. Like Ged, the otak has a "fierce" temper, but he is also tender and caring to those he loves.

[Jasper](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/A-Wizard-of-Earthsea/character-analysis/#Jasper), however, arouses Ged's temper. He goads Ged and plays him for a fool to get the better of him. When Jasper challenges Ged to show off his power, Ged claims Gontishmen do not practice sorcery "for pleasure or praise." There is situational irony in this assertion, because praise is exactly what Ged desires from wizardry. Ged only makes this claim to cover up his lack of knowledge in the art of illusion. A need to shame Jasper is what drives Ged toward excellence, but this need comes from Ged's pride. This pride blinds Ged from realizing that a rivalry with Jasper contains danger and darkness. Jasper insinuates that Ged is a fool, and indeed Ged is not wise enough at this point to fully control his own baser impulses. As the Master Namer tells Ged, "a mage can control only ... what he can name exactly and wholly." Ged does not yet know his whole self and therefore cannot control himself wholly. To learn to do so is the aim of his character journey in the novel.

***Summary and Analysis Part by Part:***

***Summary Part 1:***

In the morning, [Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) disembarks the Shadow and arrives in the town of Thwil on the isle of Roke. He tries to ask for directions to the School for wizards, but he has trouble getting the townspeople to steer him toward the place—they either outright refuse to answer him or respond in riddles. Ged eventually makes his way to a square where there is a great building. He enters and finds a small wooden door. Ged knocks on the door and says he is looking for the Warder of the School. An old man opens the door, introduces himself as the [doormaster](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-doormaster-the-master-doorkeeper), and invites Ged to enter the School if he can. Ged steps forward—but though he feels he has crossed the threshold he soon realizes he hasn’t moved.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Ged finds himself a little bit out of his depth on the Isle of Roke. The place clearly takes pride in the role it plays as a home for wizards and mages, and Ged finds himself struggling to simply find the School. This demonstrates, again, that Ged needs to learn how to exercise his patience more readily.

***Summary Part 2:***

[Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) casts an opening spell he learned from his aunt, yet the power that holds the doorway is stronger than the charm. Ged asks the [doormaster](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-doormaster-the-master-doorkeeper) for help. The doormaster tells Ged to say his own [true name](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/symbols/true-names) aloud. Though in the world of Earthsea doing such a thing is unheard of unless one’s life is directly in danger, Ged speaks his name out loud—this allows him to pass through the doorway. As Ged walks through, he has the sensation that a [shadow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-shadow) has followed him inside.

***Analysis Part 2:***

This passage again underscores the powerful nature of true names in the world of Earthsea. True names can unlock doors—literally—but judging by the shadowy premonition Ged gets as he enters the School, they also open the gateway for outside forces.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) now sees that the wooden door was merely an illusion: the door is actually ivory, made from the tooth of a dragon. The [doormaster](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-doormaster-the-master-doorkeeper) welcomes Ged and leads him through the corridors to an open courtyard. Ged relishes being in the innermost sanctum of the House of the Wise. As Ged makes eye contact with an old wizard dressed all in white and accompanied by a raven on the far side of the courtyard, he feels a sense of deep understanding of the world wash over him. The moment passes. Ged recognizes the man as the [Archmage](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/archmage-gensher) and approaches him with the letter from Ogion.

Knowledge and Patience vs. Power and Pride Theme Icon

***Analysis Part 3:***

Ged is in awe of his new surroundings. He feels that this is the place he was always meant to be. Ged believes that here, in this house of great power and wisdom, he will finally be able to achieve his full potential, and he is anxious to begin his learning.

***Summary Part 4:***

The Warder of Roke is known as the [Archmage Nemmerle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/archmage-nemmerle). A very old man who once trained [Ogion](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ogion) when Ogion was a young mage, Nemmerle asks [Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) to tell him about the seas on the journey to Roke. Ged says that things on the Shadow were mostly calm—except for a terrible storm the day before. Nemmerle speaks some ancient words over Ged. Ged has the sensation of standing in a room full of shadows. Nemmerle finishes and urges Ged to run along.

Identity and the Shadow Self Theme Icon

***Analysis Part 4:***

The Archmage Nemmerle is an old and wise man who seems to be able to learn the whole of Ged’s history—and perhaps even divine his future—with a few simple words. Ged is awestruck but also mildly frightened by the man’s immense power.

***Summary Part 5:***

As [Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) sets out to explore the school, he runs into a tall, pompous young man who introduces himself as [Jasper](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/jasper) and offers to show Ged around. Ged can tell that Jasper is wealthy, and he is immediately put off by Jasper’s upper-class haughtiness. Ged introduces himself to Jasper as Sparrowhawk. Jasper helps Ged select a cloak from the wardrobe room, shows him the library where books of lore and ancient rune-tomes are kept, and brings him by the humble dormitories upstairs. When Ged makes a remark about Jasper having to get used to living so simply, Jasper bristles defensively.

***Analysis Part 5:***

Jasper and Ged get off on the wrong foot right away. Ged dislikes Jasper’s haughty personality while Jasper resents being teased. The two boys establish a rivalry within moments of meeting one another—a dynamic that will impact both their lives in profound, unpredictable ways.Knowledge and Patience vs. Power and Pride Theme Icon

***Summary Part 6:***

A gong rings, summoning the students of the school to the refectory for their midday meal. At the Long Table—rumored to be enchanted to accommodate an endless number of people—[Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) and [Jasper](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/jasper) sit near [Vetch](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/vetch-estarriol), a heavy-set boy even darker-skinned than Ged himself. Ged immediately takes a liking to the sarcastic Vetch. Vetch and Jasper take Ged into town after lunch. Ged is amazed by how prevalent magic is throughout the town of Thwil—even children cast enchantments as pranks in the streets.

***Analysis Part 6:***

Ged’s early introduction to the Isle of Roke is full of competing emotions. He is grateful to be in such a special place—yet even the slightest complication, like his distaste for Jasper, makes him fear he’s made the wrong choice in coming here to study. Ged is clearly in conflict with himself even as he begins what he believes to be the next chapter in his grand destiny.

***Summary Part 7:***

Jesper and [Vetch](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/vetch-estarriol) lead [Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) up into the lush woods beyond town. At the base of Roke Knoll, a green hill, Jasper asks Ged to perform some famous Gontish magic for them. Vetch urges Jasper to let Ged be, but Ged insists he has skill and power enough to perform any spell. Jasper encourages Ged to perform an illusion. Jasper himself speaks a spell creating the illusion of a stream running down the side of the hill. Vetch picks up a piece of earth and speaks over it, creating the illusion that it is a bumble bee. Ged, heartbroken, says he doesn’t know how to create illusions yet: “We Gontishmen,” he tells the others, “do not play [sorcery] for pleasure or praise.”Cosmic Balance Theme Icon

***Analysis Part 7:***

Though Ged is hungry to expand his powers and show off what he’s made of, here, he finds himself reluctant to show his hand so early. He doesn’t want to be made fun of, nor does he want to reveal himself to be less adept than his fellow students. He tries to couch his shame in a prideful statement about the proper uses of magic—a statement that is truer than even he knows.Knowledge and Patience vs. Power and Pride Theme Icon

***Summary Part 8:***

 That night, [Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) lies alone in bed feeling despondent. He regrets having come to Roke. When there is a knock at the door, however, and [Vetch](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/vetch-estarriol) comes in to talk to Ged—asking questions about Ged’s youth and telling stories about his own upbringing in the East Reach—Ged feels comforted. He sees that though Vetch is soon to be made sorcerer, there is a greater power Vetch holds: the power of kindness. The encounter with Vetch restores Ged’s confidence. He reminds himself that though his schoolmates are more skilled in illusion than he, none of them have saved a village from destruction as he has.

***Analysis Part 8:***

At the height of Ged’s misery, Vetch steps in to show Ged that he is not alone. Ged’s faith in his own decision to come to Roke is restored—he feels hopeful that he will learn and make friends here as he always dreamed he would. It is easy for Ged to get down on himself or to feel insufficient, but he tries to remind himself of the great things he’s already accomplished, no matter how small they might seem to his classmates.

***Summary Part 9:***

In the weeks and months that follow, [Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) devotes himself intensely to his studies with the nine Masters of Roke. Each day he studies the deeds of great heroes and the lore of Earthsea; he learns the art of manipulating the weather; he continues his studies in herbals and healing; he learns illusion and changing spells from the [Master Hand](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-master-hand). Ged finds that the art of illusion comes easily to him, and he begins deepening his relationship with the Master Hand as he seeks more knowledge. During one lesson, Ged asks how he might learn to change a pebble into a diamond and keep it that way. The Master Hand, however, warns Ged that the art of illusion is not about changing the thing itself. To change an object, one must change its [true name](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/symbols/true-names): to do that would throw off the balance of the world.

***Analysis Part 9:***

As Ged delves deeper and deeper into his studies, he enjoys learning everything he can about the many different facets of sorcery and magic. Still, however, Ged hungers for greater power. He doesn’t yet understand the careful balance of the universe—and how the use of magic for purposeless reasons threatens that balance. Ged still has a lot to learn about the world around him, even as he plumbs the depths of the magical arts.Cosmic Balance Theme Icon

***Summary Part 10:***

One day, the [Master Hand](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-master-hand) says, [Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) will learn powerful changing spells—but he will have to be careful about what he changes, when he changes it, and how he goes about it: to throw off the equilibrium of the world is a dangerous game. “To light a candle,” the Master Hand warns, “is to cast a shadow.” Not all rocks, he says, can be diamonds. After leaving the Master Hand, Ged encounters [Jasper](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/jasper) in the hall. The two exchange barbs, and Ged finds himself offended even more deeply by Jasper’s haughty, cruel nature. He becomes more determined than ever to outdo his rival and prove himself to Jasper. He wants to humiliate the other boy publicly. He cannot yet sense the darkness in their rivalry—the dark danger the Master Hand just warned him about.

***Analysis Part 10:***

Ged purports to understand and internalize the Master Hand’s words about accepting the world as it is, maintaining the balance of the universe, and being aware of the chain reactions that can occur when one ignores the world’s Equilibrium. Yet when confronted with Jasper and the boy’s cruel taunts, Ged is unable to remember the Master’s wise words—he is consumed only by hatred and a desire to do whatever he needs to do to get revenge and prove himself.Cosmic Balance Theme Icon

***Summary Part 11:***

That winter, [Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) and seven other students are sent to the northernmost part of Roke Island to study at the Isolate Tower with the [Master Namer](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-master-namer). There, Ged and his fellow students learn the [true names](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/symbols/true-names) of every geographical feature of the cape. The work is draining  and boring, but the Master urges his pupils to accept that if one wants to control the elements, one must first know the true names of that which they seek to change.

***Analysis Part 12:***

Ged yearns for a fast accumulation of knowledge, power, and skill—but instead, his teachers again and again try to impress upon him and his fellow prentices just how important it is to be careful, deliberate, and thoughtful about the spells one weaves.

***Summary Part 13:***

True magic, the [Master Namer](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-master-namer) entreats his students to understand, comes from the Old Speech—many words of this language have been lost throughout the ages, and some are hidden or unknown only to creatures such as dragons. One must be careful when practicing magic to use [true names](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/symbols/true-names) in order to control, change, or influence only the specific thing named in the spell: this is why wizards and mages must be so attentive, so that they do not change the balance of the world and wreak havoc on the equilibrium of the universe.

***Analysis Part 13:***

The Master Namer doesn’t teach the most interesting art—but he teaches perhaps the most important. The Master Namer wants his prentices to comprehend that to recognize and understand a thing’s true nature is the most important part of sorcery. Without care, thought, and deliberation, the universe’s balance is profoundly threatened.

***Summary Part 14:***

Ged is released from the tower earlier than his fellow pupils: he has learned well and worked hard over the year at the tower, and he returns to Roke with a sense of accomplishment—and a hunger for even more knowledge. On the way back to the school, Ged stops for shelter beneath a tree one night. While he is sleeping, a small animal curls up in his cloak. Ged recognizes the creature as an otak—similar to a small cat or fox—but he knows its [true name](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/symbols/true-names) is Hoeg. Addressing the creature by its true name, he invites it to follow him home and travel with him. The creature stays in Ged’s cloak hood all the way home.

***Analysis Part 15:***

Ged is anxious to get back to the exciting world of the School—yet as he journeys home, his encounter with the otak and his ability to make it feel seen, understood, and wanted by using its true name proves how essential the Master Namer’s instruction truly is.

***Summary part 16:***

Ged receives a warm welcome. [Vetch](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/vetch-estarriol) compliments Ged’s otak and states that those who keep wild beasts are those gifted in the Old Powers; [Jasper](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/jasper), however, declares that Ged is just keeping a “rat” in his cloak. The Lord of O, once a pupil of [Archmage Nemmerle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/archmage-nemmerle), has come to the school for a feast with his bride in tow. Vetch, Ged, and Jasper admire the Lady of O and enjoy one of the master’s songs as he regales the feasters with old tales and deeds. Jasper performs an illusion for the Lady, conjuring a beautiful white tree and a white bird with a long tail. The Lady begs her husband to allow Jasper to come to court with them as their illusionist—but Jasper insists on staying at school. As the others praise Jasper’s illusion, Ged privately thinks to himself that he could have created a better one.

***Analysis Part 16:***

Ged is so happy to be back at school—and on the cusp of learning more new things—that he laughs off Jasper’s taunts and chooses to bask in the festive atmosphere rather than waste energy being upset or defensive. Still, the threat of Jasper’s cruelty—and Ged’s plans to retaliate against him—linger. Ged is still determined to prove himself to Jasper and to show everyone else that he is the most skilled wizard at the School.

***Quotations:***

***Quotation 1:***

But then he too began to look at the Lady of O, wondering if indeed this was such mortal beauty as the old tales told of. (3.84)

If you read the <em>Harry Potter</em> books, then a lot of <em>A Wizard of Earthsea</em> will seem familiar. Here's one major difference, though: Harry Potter has a love interest (or several), whereas there's no such thing in <em>Earthsea</em>. Ged grows up in several ways, but he only deals very little with something that is part of growing up – sexuality.  Why do you think Le Guin leaves that out?

***Quotation 2:***

For magic consists in this, the true naming of a thing. (3.68)

Kurremkarmerruk explains this to Ged, as well as going on to explain that there are lots of names that people will never know. The idea of true names is a common idea in some cultures, [**as Le Guin mentions**](http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2004/feb/09/sciencefictionfantasyandhorror.ursulakleguin), but let's be honest: the idea that words are magical must be really appealing to an author.

***Quotation 3:***

With voice and hand he made the Opening spell which his aunt had taught him long ago; it was the prize among all her stock of spells, and he wove it well now. But it was only a witch's charm, and the power that held this doorway was not moved at all. (3.6)

His aunt taught him this powerful spell and Ged is very powerful himself, but the power of the mages on Roke is just too much for him. This might be the first time we see Ged try to do something and fail.

***Quotation 4:***

Standing there with rage in his heart, looking after Jasper, Ged swore to himself to outdo his rival, and not in some mere illusion-match but in a test of power. He would prove himself, and humiliate Jasper. (3.63)

The first half of this book is like one long demonstration that Ged is overly proud. Here he is, learning magic, and what's he thinking about? How this one kid didn't give him respect. What's really killer about this is that Jasper isn't totally a villain here. In fact, while Ged thinks Jasper's the one who's a proud jerk, Jasper probably thinks the very same thing about Ged. (Want to know more? Check out "[**Characters: Jasper**](https://www.shmoop.com/wizard-of-earthsea/jasper.html).")

***Quotation 5:***

As their eyes met, a bird sang aloud in the branches of the tree. In that moment Ged understood the singing of the bird, and the language of the water falling in the basin of the fountain, and the shape of the clouds, and the beginning and end of the wind that stirred the leaves: it seemed to him that he himself was a word spoken by the sunlight. (3.13)

Language is a very important part of the supernatural in <em>A Wizard of Earthsea</em> – for instance, you have to know a true name to work a spell. Here's a moment where we see language sort of break out in a supernatural fashion – Ged seems to understand the language of the bird and the water. Later, when talking to Yarrow, Ged will describe the world as a word, so this is a slight foreshadowing of that idea.

***Quotation 6:***

But you must not change one thing, one pebble, one grain of sand, until you know what good and evil will follow on that act. The world is in balance, in Equilibrium. A wizard's power of Changing and of Summoning can shake the balance of the world." (3.57)

This is the Master Hand telling Ged that it's easy (and fine) to make illusions, but hard (and dangerous) to actually change things. Now, Le Guin (or her editor) seems a little inconsistent with capitalizations – notice that sometimes it's "the Balance" and sometimes it's "the balance." (And sometimes it's "Equilibrium.") But this is one of the central issues about power and duty – that the wizards can't just go about doing whatever they want, but have to worry about the Balance too.

***Quotation 7:***

Yet a greater, unlearned skill he possessed, which was the art of kindness. That night, and always from then on, he offered and gave Ged friendship, a sure and open friendship which Ged could not help but return. (3.52)

Whenever we think about friendship in this book, we think about Vetch – he's the nicest, the calmest, and the friendliest student we meet. Vetch is such a friendly guy that he can be friends with both Ged and Jasper – quite the feat.

***Quotation 8:***

So bolstering up his pride, he set all his strong will on the work they gave him, the lessons and crafts and histories and skills taught by the grey-cloaked Masters of Roke, who were called the Nine. (3.54)

Le Guin comes out and tells us very clearly about the school and how it's set up – which is good because it's not like she can just say, "Oh, it's just like the magic school you went to." Because we've never been to magic school, she has to tell us that there are nine masters and what they teach. (Which is why it's so funny to us when she's describing the Master Patterner and says that no one knows what the Patterner teaches (4.107).)