***A Wizard of Earth Sea***

***Chapter 8***

***Summary:***

### Hunting

* Ged buys a small boat and fixes it up, since he knows all about shipbuilding (thanks to Pechvarry). He sails northwest across the sea, retracing the route he flew as a falcon in Chapter 7. He wants to find the shadow, and especially wants to find it over the water, since he feels that water is associated with life.
* Unfortunately, Ged first runs into rain and some other weather that's not so great for hunting shadows. Fed up with this hunt, Ged yells out to summon his shadow (8.10) – and, what do you know, his shadow shows up. Why didn't Ged summon money – or at least a snack?
* Since Ged is the one chasing, the shadow starts to run away, even though the weather is worse for shadow-hunting. They run so far and fast that Ged isn't quite sure where they are anymore.
* The shadow tries to lose Ged in some fog and Ged crashes his boat. (Sound familiar?)
* Ged nearly drowns (and somehow avoids another coma), but gets tossed up on a small deserted island that turns out to be not so deserted after all.
* There are two old castaways here in a small hut, and they're terrified of Ged. But he's a pretty good guest since all he wants is to stay warm and breathe air rather than water.
* Ged wonders if these two people are some royal children from Karg who have been exiled (since their rival wouldn't want to spill royal blood – which is how people thought before TV was invented).
* Then we get this: "But the truth of this guess he did not learn until, years later, the quest of the Ring of Erreth-Akbe led him to the Kargad Lands, and to the Tombs of Atuan" (8.41). This kind of seems like a tease to get you to read the next book in the series.
* One of these castaways gives Ged a broken ring as a present. In return, Ged turns their well into sweet water.
* Ged makes himself a new boat out of scraps of driftwood and magic (which is our new band name), and he goes sailing south after the shadow.
* (And now he realizes that the shadow pulled the same fog trick on him that he pulled on the Kargad warriors when he was a boy in Chapter 1, which explains why that sounded so familiar.)
* While Ged is exploring an island, the shadow appears in his boat and Ged tries to grab it. The shadow escapes but Ged comes to a realization:  "He knew now, and the knowledge was hard, that his task had never been to undo what he had done, but to finish what he had begun" (8.59).
* We're not sure what that means, but we're excited to find out.
* Ged sails to a nearby island where he finds a village and can finally rest.

***Brief Summary:***

Ged heads to the Port of Gont. Ged learns no boats will be leaving the Port of Gont because Sunreturn is nearing. Although Ged wishes he could remain in Gont, he knows he cannot and sets off along the coast. He comes to a small village where he searches for and finds someone who is selling a boat. The boat is barely seaworthy but Ged buys it. Using both tools and magic, Ged patches-up the boat. Using his wizard staff as the mast, Ged creates a sail of spells and sets off.

He sets his course back to the north from where he had just come. He had no plan but to retrace the course that brought him to Gont. As he travels, Ged hopes if he must meet the shadow he can do so on the sea. He thinks even if death is what comes of his meeting up with the shadow, if they meet on the sea then perhaps he can drag the shadow down into the sea depths with him and kill them both.

As the boat continues forward in the grey, bleak weather, Ged feels the presence of the shadow and wonders what it is waiting for. Suddenly he shouts to the shadow to come to him there on the boat in the middle of the sea. After a few moments of silent waiting, Ged sees the shadow. Ged sees the shadow now has a form that slightly resembles a man. Because it is still day, the shadow is partially blinded and Ged sees it before it sees him. Ged cannot tell if the shadow is moving toward him but he now knows it has seen him. Dread and fear fill Ged. Ged calls the wind to drive his boat toward the shadow and as it nears, the shadow flees.

Ged follows the shadow. The shadow begins to look less like a man and more like shadow as it makes its way towards Gont. Ged continues to follow the shadow but it seems to be getting farther and farther from him. A storm comes through the sea as Ged chases the shadow and soon he has lost all sight of the shadow in the rain. By now Ged realizes he must be south of Gont but he cannot be sure where he is. Just then the shadow appears again and leads Ged on another chase. But soon his little boat is smashed on the rocks. Ged is tossed into the sea and tries to fight his way to a nearby sand beach. He washes ashore with the wizard staff still in his hands.

By the time Ged gets up off the beach it is night. He is cold and beaten and soaking wet. As he alights with his staff he realizes he has not crashed on an island but a small reef. As he walks he sees a little hut and goes into it. Inside he finds two people, one an old man with white hair. The people in the hut look terrified and Ged tries to speak with them and explain he does not mean them any harm. He realizes they speak Kargish, a language he does not know. Ged eats and drinks and tries to figure out where he has landed. He spends the next three nights on the little reef trying to recover. All the time Ged is there, the people fear him; they have not seen other men in many years.

Ged gets to rebuilding his boat from what little remaining wood he can find. While he works, the old woman watches him. The old lady brings Ged a gift, an old child’s dress with the symbol of the God-Brothers of the Kargard Empire on it in pearls. The old lady smiles and then pulls out a small bit of metal and gives it to Ged. Ged thinks it is possible the old man and woman are from a royal house of the Kargard Empire and may have been left out on this rock by some tyrant years ago when they were just children. He feels a deep pity for the man and woman.

Ged tries to tell the old couple he will take them anywhere they like but the refuse to leave their little strip of rock. So to repay them for their kindness, Ged sets a spell on the one little well that they use so the brackish water will be clear and clean and sweet from then on. Then Ged sets back out to sea. Ged knows he must hunt the shadow now by luck, not knowing where it has gone. He also knows now he is the hunter, not the hunted; Ogion had been right, the shadow could not draw his power as long as he was the hunter.

Ged keeps his course set to the southeast. Ged does not get much sleep that night as he must focus on all the charms and spells holding his small boat together. In the morning Ged sees a strange looking land he is approaching. He believes he must be in the East Reach now. There are no beaches on the island, just steep cliffs. The wind drives his little boat into a sound leading into a narrow sea-land through the island. Ged is unsure and feels the shadow may have led him here into a trap. He follows the sea-lane, the cliffs of the islands rising around him and shutting out the light of the day. When he runs to the end of the inlet Ged is sure he has fallen into a trap. He turns the boat around. Suddenly he feels a chilling fear and looking over his shoulder he sees the shadow is behind him in the little boat.

Ged chooses to attack the shadow. Magic cannot save him now, Ged must rely on his physical strength. Ged reaches for the shadow and suddenly goes blind. In an instant he can see again and he catches a glimpse of the shadow stretched over him. It only covered him for an instant before it recoiled and disappeared like smoke clearing.

Ged only has a moment to recover before he must tend to the boat and work on the spells holding it together. A third time Ged and the shadow have met and touched. This third time leaves Ged weary, fearless but also joyless. Ged realizes he has formed a bond with the shadow, one that can be broken only by his death. He knows until their final meeting, he will never have rest. Ged sails on until he reaches the Hands. He goes to a small village where he is treated kindly by the people there and is given a place to sleep.

***Brief Analysis:***

Even though the thought of facing the shadow terrifies Ged, he knows he must go after it. Within a few short days Ged runs into the shadow twice and both times it leads him into traps—first it strands him on a barren reef and the second time it leads him into a dangerous inlet deep in one of the islands of the East Reach. After his third run-in with the shadow Ged is no longer afraid but he is also no longer hopeful. He realizes chasing after the shadow is not the answer to his problem. He will never be free of the shadow as long as he lives; the only way to put an end to their chase is death. Ged knows as long as he lives he will not find peace because he and the shadow are connected and in a constant tug-of-war with one another.

***Critical Study:***

[Ged](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/A-Wizard-of-Earthsea/character-analysis/#Ged) gets a boat and sails out to sea, calling out to the shadow. Ged sees the shadow across the water, but as soon as the shadow sees him, it flees. Ged follows it through a storm, through a fog, until he crashes his boat on some rocks. He washes ashore on a beach and discovers an old man and old woman living in a hut. Ged stays three nights with them and suspects they are lost children of the Kargad royal family. Ged rebuilds his boat and sails off again in search of the shadow.

[The shadow](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/A-Wizard-of-Earthsea/character-analysis/#The_shadow) leads Ged into a muddy inlet, where his boat becomes trapped by branches. The two fight. When they touch, Ged feels ice cold, but soon enough, the shadow flees again. Touching the shadow forges a bond between them, and Ged is "neither hunted nor hunter, now." He stops in a village afterward to recuperate.

In this chapter [Ged](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/A-Wizard-of-Earthsea/character-analysis/#Ged) learns something important about the shadow: it cannot "draw on his power, so long he [is] turned against it." When this realization is paired with the revelation in [Chapter 10](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/A-Wizard-of-Earthsea/chapter-10-summary/) that the shadow is part of him, it becomes clear that Le [Guin](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/A-Wizard-of-Earthsea/author/) means to suggest that one must be proactive in one's self-awareness. One's inner light can overcome one's darker tendencies as long as a person acknowledges and accepts that these darker tendencies exist. [Ogion](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/A-Wizard-of-Earthsea/character-analysis/" \l "Ogion)'s confidence that Ged will draw on his education and experience to figure out how to defeat the shadow is not misplaced. By this point Ged has become truly humble and is willing to put right his own mistakes, even at high cost to himself.

Once again, Le Guin highlights the importance of community. Even though Ged is truly on his own against the shadow, he finds rest and comfort with fellow living beings. The lost Kargish woman offers him food, and the villagers at the end of the chapter give him "meat and drink in plenty." He finds comfort in "human voices speaking his own Hardic tongue" as well as a place in their company by the fire.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

[Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) arrives at the Port of Gont with nothing but the staff [Ogion](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ogion) has carved for him. He asks for passage on a ship bound north or west, but it is close to the Sunreturn festival, and no ships are departing. Ged spends the night having dinner with some seamen. Ged enjoys their company and wishes he could stay on Gont and renounce his power in order to live like an ordinary man, but he knows he must move on. He takes his leave of his new friends and heads to a nearby village, where he finds a fisherman willing to sell him a ramshackle longboat. Ged exhausts himself securing the boat with charms and spells. After a good night’s sleep, he sets off the next morning, raising up the wind with yet more enchantments.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Ged once dreamed of achieving power, glory, and renown as a wizard. Now, having faced such horrors as he never could have imagined, Ged instead finds himself dreaming of an ordinary life as an ordinary man. This is just a fleeting fantasy, however: Ged knows he is duty-bound to restore balance to the world and to encounter and defeat the malevolent presence he alone is responsible for releasing.

***Summary Part 2:***

[Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk)’s plan is to retrace his course. He hopes to draw [the shadow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-shadow) out and meet it on the sea. Evil, Ged believes, is tied to earth—but on the sea, he may be able to meet the shadow on neutral terms. If he must, Ged is prepared to drown himself along with the shadow in order to save the Archipelago from its threat.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Ged knows that in unleashing the shadow into the world, he has put many people at risk. Ged wants to right his own wrongs, and he’s prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice to restore balance to the Archipelago and keep his people safe.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) uses little magic as he sails over the choppy seas. After days of sailing, he grows frustrated with [the shadow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-shadow)’s failure to appear. He calls for it in a fit of rage—and within moments, he can see the dark shape flying across the water. It has abandoned its gebbeth form and now looks more like the shadow of a man—Ged fears it is growing stronger. As the shadow flies closer, Ged is overcome with fear, yet he manages to summon his strength, call up a wind, and sail directly at the shadow. The shadow turns and flees northward. Ged follows the shadow until it turns once again, leading him southward once more. As the shadow loops around, Ged notices its shape looks less defined. Ged continues to follow the shadow into a rainstorm.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Even though Ged believes his shadow is growing stronger—and thus represents an even greater threat to him—Ged knows that he cannot run from it any longer. He must hunt it and face it, no matter how much fear the idea of doing such a thing instills in him. It is Ged’s duty to return the shadow to the place from whence it came, and he cannot hide from his fate.

***Summary Part 4:***

[Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) continues to pursue [the shadow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-shadow) southward, even past the isle of Gont. The rain gives way to mist, and Ged catches sight of the shadow up ahead. Ged uses a clearing charm to see through the mist so that he can follow the shadow as it ducks, dips, and veers off course, become more and more divorced from its form each time he lays eyes on it. Finally, however, a large wave pulls Ged’s boat out of the sea and brings it down on some rocks; it smashes to bits, and only Ged’s staff remains intact. He tries to make his way to the beach, but he is caught in the waves and begins to drown. At last, a current brings him to land, where he lies spent on a cold beach.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Ged is determined to catch up with the shadow, but either the shadow or cosmic forces beyond either of their control result in Ged becoming marooned in a strange land. This passage metaphorizes the difficulty of confronting the truth about oneself: it is often difficult, arduous work that must be done in stages. Ged doesn’t yet have all the tools he needs to defeat the shadow, and so he winds up on a strange island.

***Summary Part 5:***

It is night by the time [Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) is able to move again. Exhausted, he walks toward the dunes, hoping to find shelter. Atop the dunes, however, he sees only another beach on the other side—he is on a small sandbar, not a true island. Ged turns to his left and begins walking. Soon, he sees a ramshackle hut. He enters to find an [elderly man](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-elderly-man-and-the-elderly-woman) sitting by the fire and an [elderly woman](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-elderly-man-and-the-elderly-woman) huddled on a pile of rags in the corner. Ged tells the pale, wan couple he is seeking shelter and will not hurt him, but they stare at him with terror in his eyes. He sets down his staff and asks for warm clothes. The old man wordlessly helps Ged, but Ged can tell he doesn’t understand him. Ged asks the old man if he speaks Kargish, and the old man nods.

***Analysis Part 5:***

This new wrinkle in Ged’s journey represents a moment in which he feels trapped, exhausted, and defeated. However, Ged will soon realize that he has an important opportunity on this deserted stretch of land to do some introspection, some healing, and to get some rest before facing the inevitable challenges ahead.

***Summary Part 6:***

[Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) is too exhausted to figure out who the old Kargs are, why they are living on an abandoned sandbar, or what their relationship to one another is. He helps himself to some water and food and quickly falls asleep. For a full day after his arrival, he is overcome with fever and exhaustion and spends most of his time sleeping. On the second day, Ged rises and explores the sandbar where [the shadow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-shadow) has tricked him into becoming marooned.

***Analysis Part 6:***

Ged knows that the shadow has led him here to entrap him, but he is determined to find a way out of this trap and back to his mission of besting the shadow once and for all. Ged doesn’t let himself become sidetracked by self-loathing, remorse, or sadness.

***Summary Part 7:***

The old couple remain wary of [Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) as he gets to work repairing the hull of his old boat, which has washed ashore. Slowly, they become more accustomed to him, and [the old woman](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-elderly-man-and-the-elderly-woman) even offers him fresh-caught mussels. That evening, the elderly woman shows him a beautiful child’s brocade dress covered in pearls shaped in the emblem of the Kargad Empire, as well as a broken ring. Ged begins to believe the couple are not married but are rather a once-royal brother and sister pair who have long lived in exile.

***Analysis Part 7:***

Ged begins to understand more about his unlikely companions on this far-flung stretch of land. He comes to have empathy for them even as he recognizes that they are part of an empire who once attacked his people. Light and darkness, Ged understands, are inside everyone.

***Summary Part 8:***

As Ged prepares to leave, he tries to offer the [elderly man](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-elderly-man-and-the-elderly-woman) and [the old woman](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-elderly-man-and-the-elderly-woman) passage on his boat to a more populated place, but they refuse his offer. Ged readies some supplies and sets an enchantment on their one freshwater spring so that it never runs dry. He returns to the sea and sets off, just as baffled by his mission as he was before landing on the sandbar. The only thing Ged now knows for sure is that he is no longer being hunted: he is now the hunter. His shadow is just as afraid of him as he is of it.

***Analysis Part 8:***

Ged has come to feel a kind of fondness or protectiveness toward the elderly man and woman. He feels a sense of duty to them, even though they are members of the Kargad Empire—a group that once threatened Ged’s own life. Ged now sees that he has a larger enemy and a larger purpose: to confront the shadow. This allows him to focus on doing acts of goodwill toward others, even those he might have considered his enemies in the past.

***Summary Part 9:***

Ged follows a southeasterly course across the sea, nervous but hopeful that his rig, held together by enchantments, will take him to land. Ged barely sleeps, so arduous is the work of continually keeping up the spells holding the boat together. As a new day breaks, Ged feels a strange sense of fear come over him: he takes this to mean that [the shadow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-shadow) is near, and that he is headed in the right direction. Soon, Ged spies a rocky cliff face of land—he is uncertain of exactly where he is, but he believes he has landed somewhere in the East Reach. He wonders whether the shadow has drawn him into a trap, but he knows that regardless, he must follow his instincts.

***Analysis Part 9:***

In this passage, Ged experiences an acute sense of fear, but he leans into that sensation and follows it, refusing to back away from his own discomfort. Ged has learned that the shadow will pursue him no matter what—and so even though he fears it, he must meet it or spend his life running from it. Ged shows more bravery than he ever has by pursuing what frightens him. True glory and power is not about grand shows of force but rather about confronting what one dreads.

***Summary Part 10:***

Ged steers his boat into a small inlet, but as he goes further and further into the cliffs, he spies no sign of life. He feels a coldness come over him. He turns around and finds that [the shadow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-shadow) is standing behind him in the boat. Ged is not afraid, but ready instead—he knows that no magic, enchantment, or wizardry will help him. He lunges for the shadow, and though pain and coldness fill him, he realizes that when he grabs the shadow, he is only grabbing at the air. The shadow immediately shudders and shrinks away, and then it turns into smoke and flees back out to sea.

***Analysis Part 10:***

This is the first time Ged and the shadow have connected like this since the shadow was first let loose. The shadow is not able to wound Ged as it did that night on Roke Knoll—this demonstrates that as Ged becomes stronger, the shadow grows weaker. There is a strange balance between the two, and Ged must learn how to work it to his advantage in order to defeat the shadow once and for all.

***Summary Part 11:***

Ged falls to his knees, exhausted and weakened. He cannot tell if [the shadow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/the-shadow) has filled him with cold and weariness or whether he’s simply tired from his arduous journey. As he stands and steers his boat back out to the sea, he knows he is neither hunted nor hunter. His third meeting with his shadow has instead formed a bond between them—now, neither can escape the other. He knows they will meet again—and that their next meeting, however it turns out, will be their final encounter. His mission, he now realizes, is not to undo what he did in unleashing the shadow into the world but rather to finish what he started.

***Analysis Part 11:***

At first, the shadow hunted Ged relentlessly. Then, Ged hunted his shadow with fear but without pause. Now, Ged realizes, neither of them are assigned to the roles of hunted or hunter: they are bound to one another in a more complicated way. Ged’s relationship with the shadow ties in with the concept of the universe’s careful equilibrium—the two have been engaged in a kind of dance as they’ve crossed the seas and are now at a point of standoff. Equally matched, Ged knows he must come up with a way to retake his advantage and complete his mission.

***Summary Part 12:***

Out on the bright sea, [Ged](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/a-wizard-of-earthsea/characters/ged-duny-sparrowhawk) summons to mind the maps of the East Reach, thinking of a place to which he might sail. With a direction set in his mind he sails on, and soon comes to the coast of an island. From the ocean, he can spot a small village. When he docks and disembarks, the townspeople marvel at his staff and show him great hospitality. Ged eats, bathes, and at last falls into a hard-won sleep at a small, cozy inn.

***Analysis Part 12:***

Ged’s chase with the shadow has left him profoundly drained. He knows that in order to best the shadow the next time he meets it, he will need to gather all his strength and honor the work he’s done so far.

***Quotations:***

***Quotation 1:***

"Do you understand me? Do you speak no Hardic?" Ged paused, and then asked, "Kargad?" (8.31)

We're mostly interested in language as it relates to magic (because magic is fun). But here's one of the few times when we learn that there are other languages, and contemplate all the real issues that go along with language. That is, it's hard to talk to someone who doesn't speak your language. (Maybe this is one reason why it's hard to talk to dragons. Sigh.)

***Quotation 2:***

For the third time they had met and touched: he had of his own will turned to the shadow, seeking to hold it with living hands. (8.58)

Ged has faced his shadow several times, but in all those cases, it was the <em>shadow</em> that was doing the hunting – only now does Ged take the active (rather than reactive) role. In this scene it seems as if part of Ged's coming-of-age is that he's willing to take action himself.

***Quotation 3:***

And all at once he shouted out aloud, "I am here, I Ged the Sparrowhawk, and I summon my shadow!" (8.10)

When Ged takes Ogion's advice and starts to hunt the shadow, the balance of power shifts. Ged uses his true name here, which might be part of the power, but we think that most of his power actually comes from taking the lead.

***Quotation 4:***

And thinking of that day he saw all at once, with a qualm at his heart, how the shadow had tricked him with his own trick, bringing that mist about him on the sea as if bringing it out of his own past, blinding him to danger and fooling him to his death. (8.46)

This is a little hint that the shadow might be part of Ged – after all, the shadow uses Ged's own trick. But it's also a reminder that Ged might not be totally free of pride. It takes a certain amount of pride to sail into the fog, thinking that you really know the way.

***Quotation 5:***

There was a great wish in him to stay here on Gont, and foregoing all wizardry and venture, forgetting all power and horror, to live in peace like any man on the known, dear ground of his home land. That was his wish; but his will was other. (8.3)

Ged may want to live a normal life, but he chooses not to right here (after he's scared away the shadow). And why does he choose not to? Because he feels as if he has some responsibility to fix what he messed up in Chapter 4.

***Quotation 6:***

Had he not used that magic he would have been hard put to keep the crank little boat on such a course, on that rough sea. (8.9)

This part confuses us: the whole book has been about maintaining the Balance, but then, as soon as Ged's hunting the shadow, it seems fine to use magic to sail. What makes sailing different than, say, when rain falls on Ged? Perhaps this is a reminder to us that Ged is engaged in serious business.

***Quotation 7:***

From some hidingplace sewn in the skirt of the dress she took a small object, and this was held out to Ged. It was a bit of dark metal, a piece of broken jewelry perhaps, the half-circle of a broken ring. Ged looked at it, but she gestured that he take it, and was not satisfied until he took it; then she nodded and smiled again; she had made him a present. (8.39)

Although they can't communicate very well, Ged and the two Kargad exiles have a pretty OK relationship by the end of Ged's stay. We wouldn't want to call them friends, but these royal exiles at least gives Ged a present, and Ged reciprocates by charming their well. (Ever notice how friends trade presents?)

***Quotation 8:***

He knew now, and the knowledge was hard, that his task had never been to undo what he had done, but to finish what he had begun. (8.59)

Some of Ged's education occurs outside of school, and this is perhaps the biggest part of that. By the time Ged has become the hunter, he seems to have learned something very important: that the shadow is not something to be defeated, but accepted. That's certainly not something he learned at school.

***Quotation 9:***

Ged made the charm well and honestly, working on it all that night and the next day, omitting nothing, sure and patient, though all the while his mind was strained with fear […] (8.5)

Remember how in Chapter 5 Ged was so overwhelmed by his fear of the shadow that he didn't think he could do his duty for the town of Low Torning? Now, although he's still afraid of the shadow, he can concentrate well enough to do his duty by concentrating on casting this charm well.