

tales of the earthsea

tales of the earthsea is a renowned fantasy series penned by the celebrated author Ursula K. Le Guin. Comprising a collection of novels and short stories, this series has captivated readers for decades with its rich world-building, philosophical depth, and compelling characters. Often regarded as a cornerstone of modern fantasy literature, the Earthsea Cycle explores themes of balance, power, identity, and the nature of true wisdom. This article delves into the origins, themes, characters, and significance of the Tales of Earthsea, providing an in-depth understanding of why it remains a beloved staple in the fantasy genre.

Introduction to the Earthsea Series

The Earthsea Cycle was first introduced to the literary world in 1968 with the publication of *A Wizard of Earthsea*. Over the years, Ursula K. Le Guin expanded this universe with additional novels and stories, creating a comprehensive and immersive world that resonates with readers of all ages. The series is set in a fictional archipelago called Earthsea, a place where magic is an intrinsic part of life, and the balance of nature is of paramount importance.

Le Guin's storytelling is distinguished not only by its imaginative setting but also by its philosophical undertones. Unlike many traditional fantasy works that focus primarily on adventure and heroism, the Tales of Earthsea emphasize moral questions, self-discovery, and the importance of understanding one's true nature.

Overview of the Earthsea Cycle

The core of the series consists of six books, each contributing to the overarching narrative and thematic exploration:

Primary Novels

1. *A Wizard of Earthsea* (1968)
2. *The Tombs of Atuan* (1971)
3. *The Farthest Shore* (1972)
4. *Tehanu* (1990)
5. *The Other Wind* (2001)

Additional Stories and Collections

- *The Wind's Twelve Quarters* (short stories collection, includes Earthsea stories)
- *Tales from Earthsea* (a collection of short stories and a novella, also adapted into a film)

Together, these works form a cohesive universe that explores the lifecycle of the protagonist Ged, the nature of magic, and the philosophical questions surrounding power and responsibility.

Key Themes in Tales of Earthsea

Ursula K. Le Guin's Tales of Earthsea are distinguished by their exploration of profound themes that give the series its philosophical depth.

Balance and Harmony

At the heart of Earthsea is the concept of balance — between light and dark, good and evil, life and death. The series posits that harmony is essential for the world's stability and that disrupting this balance leads to chaos and destruction.

Power and Responsibility

Magic in Earthsea is not merely a tool for personal gain, but a force that must be wielded with understanding and humility. The series examines the corrupting influence of power and the importance of self-awareness.

Identity and Self-Discovery

Many characters, especially Ged, undergo journeys of self-understanding. The series emphasizes that true wisdom comes from knowing oneself and accepting one's limitations and strengths.

The Nature of Evil

Le Guin portrays evil not as an external force but as a manifestation of imbalance and ignorance. Characters' struggles often involve confronting their own darker aspects.

Major Characters in Tales of Earthsea

The series features a cast of memorable characters, each contributing to the thematic richness of the stories.

Ged (Sparrowhawk)

The protagonist of the series, Ged begins as a young, talented mage with a penchant for arrogance. His journey from a reckless youth to a wise man underscores the series' themes of humility, growth, and self-awareness.

Tenar

Introduced in *The Tombs of Atuan*, Tenar is a priestess who seeks freedom from her oppressive past. Her relationship with Ged and her own path of liberation exemplify themes of transformation and

hope.

Ogion

Ged's first mentor, Ogion embodies patience and wisdom. His teachings highlight the importance of balance and the subtlety of true magic.

Other Notable Characters

- Ged's friends and allies who assist him throughout his quests
- Antagonists representing chaos or imbalance, such as Cob or the Nameless One

World-Building and Setting

The archipelago of Earthsea is a richly detailed setting that reflects the series' themes. The islands are diverse, each with unique cultures, histories, and traditions. Magic is woven into daily life, and the inhabitants respect the natural order, often seeking harmony with the environment.

Le Guin's world-building emphasizes:

- The importance of language and words in casting magic
- The interconnectedness of all living things
- The cyclical nature of seasons, life, and death

This detailed setting creates an immersive experience that transports readers into a mystical realm where the boundaries between the mundane and the magical blur.

Philosophy and Influence of Tales of Earthsea

Le Guin's Tales of Earthsea is not just a fantasy adventure but a philosophical exploration rooted in Taoist and Zen principles. Her emphasis on balance, humility, and harmony mirrors Eastern philosophies, making the series a thoughtful meditation on life and morality.

The influence of Earthsea extends beyond literature into popular culture and academic studies of fantasy. Its innovative approach to magic and character development has inspired countless authors and creators.

Impact on Fantasy Literature

- Challenged conventional hero archetypes by emphasizing moral growth
- Introduced complex, morally ambiguous characters
- Highlighted the importance of cultural and linguistic diversity in storytelling

Adaptations and Cultural Significance

- A 2004 film adaptation, *Tales from Earthsea*, directed by Studio Ghibli's Hayao Miyazaki, brought the series to a global audience
- Inspired numerous essays, academic studies, and fan works

Why Read Tales of Earthsea?

Readers seeking a richly crafted fantasy series that combines adventure with philosophical depth will find *Tales of Earthsea* compelling. The series offers:

- Thought-provoking themes that encourage self-reflection
- Complex characters undergoing meaningful growth
- A vividly imagined world rich in culture and magic
- An exploration of morality, power, and balance that resonates universally

Additionally, Ursula K. Le Guin's lyrical prose and nuanced storytelling make the series accessible and engaging across generations.

Conclusion

tales of the earthsea remains a seminal work in the realm of fantasy literature, distinguished by its intellectual depth, moral complexity, and masterful world-building. Whether you are a longtime fan or new to the series, immersing yourself in the stories of Ged, Tenar, and the mystical archipelago offers a journey into a world where magic and philosophy intertwine. As Le Guin eloquently demonstrates, true power lies in understanding oneself and maintaining harmony with the universe. Embrace the wisdom of *Earthsea* and discover the timeless truths woven into its tales.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of 'Tales of Earthsea'?

The main themes include balance, the nature of power, self-discovery, and the importance of understanding one's true self.

Who is the protagonist in 'Tales of Earthsea'?

The primary protagonist is Ged, also known as Sparrowhawk, a young mage who embarks on a journey of growth and self-awareness.

How does 'Tales of Earthsea' differ from other fantasy series?

It emphasizes the moral and philosophical aspects of magic, focusing on balance and responsibility rather than just adventure and heroism.

Is 'Tales of Earthsea' suitable for young readers?

Yes, the series is suitable for young adults and older readers, offering complex themes and moral lessons that resonate across age groups.

What are the notable adaptations of 'Tales of Earthsea'?

The series has been adapted into a 2004 animated miniseries and influenced other media, including Studio Ghibli's film 'Gedo Senki' (Tales from Earthsea).

Who is the author of 'Tales of Earthsea'?

The series was written by Ursula K. Le Guin, a renowned American author known for her profound fantasy and science fiction works.

What is the significance of the Archipelago setting in 'Tales of Earthsea'?

The Archipelago serves as a rich, diverse backdrop that reflects the series' themes of interconnectedness, harmony, and the balance between different worlds and cultures.

Additional Resources

Tales of Earthsea: An In-Depth Exploration of Ursula K. Le Guin's Masterpiece

Introduction

Since its initial publication in 1968, Tales of Earthsea has stood as a cornerstone of fantasy literature, captivating readers with its profound themes, intricate world-building, and poetic prose. Written by Ursula K. Le Guin, this series has profoundly influenced the genre, offering a nuanced exploration of power, balance, identity, and morality. This long-form review aims to delve into the depths of the series, examining its origins, themes, narrative structure, and enduring legacy to understand why Tales of Earthsea continues to resonate with audiences worldwide.

Origins and Context

The Birth of Earthsea

Ursula K. Le Guin, an American author renowned for her literary prowess and philosophical insights, conceived the Earthsea universe as a reflection on the nature of power and knowledge. The first novel, *A Wizard of Earthsea*, was inspired by Le Guin's interest in Taoist philosophy and her desire to portray magic as a natural, balanced force rather than a mere tool for heroism.

The Series' Evolution

Originally conceived as a trilogy—A Wizard of Earthsea, The Tombs of Atuan, and The Farthest Shore—the series expanded over the years to include additional works, notably Tehanu, The Other Wind, and the short story collection Tales from Earthsea. Each installment explores different facets of the world and themes, creating a layered and complex universe.

The World of Earthsea: A Richly Imagined Universe

Geographical and Cultural Landscape

Earthsea is an archipelago of numerous islands, each with distinct cultures and histories. The geography is integral to the storytelling—vast oceans, mysterious islands, and deep caves serve as settings for adventure and introspection.

- Main Islands: Roke, Gont, Atuan, and Havnor are among the most prominent, each with unique societal structures.
- Cultural Diversity: The inhabitants exhibit diverse customs, beliefs, and attitudes towards magic and power, reflecting real-world variations.

The Concept of Balance

At the heart of Earthsea's philosophy lies the principle of equilibrium—the idea that every force has its opposite, and harmony is maintained through balance. This concept influences magic, morality, and personal growth within the series.

Narrative Themes and Philosophical Underpinnings

Magic as a Natural Force

Unlike conventional fantasy, where magic often manifests as spells or supernatural powers, Le Guin presents magic as an extension of the natural world—an expression of understanding and harmony with the universe. Wizards are scholars and practitioners of equilibrium rather than mere wielders of power.

Identity and Self-Discovery

One of the series' central themes is the journey of self-awareness. Ged, the protagonist of the first novel, embarks on a path of growth, learning to accept his strengths and limitations. The series consistently emphasizes that understanding oneself is crucial to mastery over external forces.

Power and Responsibility

Le Guin explores the nature of power—its temptations, responsibilities, and potential for corruption. Characters like Ged and the sorcerer Cob embody different facets of this theme, illustrating that true wisdom involves restraint and humility.

The Nature of Good and Evil

Rather than depicting clear-cut dichotomies, the series presents moral ambiguity, emphasizing that good and evil are complex, intertwined forces. The characters' struggles exemplify this nuanced portrayal.

Literary Style and Narrative Techniques

Poetic Prose and Symbolism

Le Guin's writing is characterized by lyrical, poetic language that elevates her storytelling. She employs symbolism and allegory to imbue her narrative with deeper meaning, often drawing from Taoist and other Eastern philosophies.

Character Development

The series excels in creating psychologically complex characters whose growth reflects the series' philosophical themes. Ged's evolution from a reckless boy to a wise man exemplifies this focus on internal development.

Nonlinear and Intertwined Narratives

While each book can be read independently, they are interconnected through themes, characters, and the overarching universe. Le Guin's subtle weaving of narrative threads creates a rich tapestry that rewards attentive reading.

Critical Reception and Legacy

Initial Impact and Awards

A Wizard of Earthsea received critical acclaim, earning the Newbery Honor and establishing Le Guin as a major voice in fantasy literature. Over subsequent decades, the series has been lauded for its intelligent approach and literary quality.

Influence on the Genre

Le Guin's approach to magic, morality, and cultural complexity has influenced countless authors and challenged the conventions of fantasy storytelling. Writers like Neil Gaiman, Patrick Rothfuss, and N.K. Jemisin have cited her work as inspiration.

Adaptations and Cultural Presence

The series has been adapted into radio dramas, graphic novels, and a 2004 film *Tales from Earthsea* directed by Hayao Miyazaki's Studio Ghibli. Despite mixed reactions to some adaptations, the core themes remain influential.

Critical Analysis of Key Works

A Wizard of Earthsea

- Focuses on Ged's early life and his discovery of magic.
- Themes: hubris, identity, and the importance of humility.
- Notable for its poetic language and mythic tone.

The Tombs of Atuan

- Explores themes of faith, power, and redemption.
- Introduces Tenar, a priestess questioning her beliefs.
- Contrasts the spiritual with the material.

The Farthest Shore

- Addresses mortality, change, and the cost of progress.
- Features Ged as an aging wizard confronting existential threats.

Tehanu and The Other Wind

- Examine gender roles, trauma, and societal change.
- Introduce new perspectives and deepen the series' philosophical scope.

Enduring Legacy and Contemporary Relevance

Philosophical Depth

Le Guin's integration of Taoist principles and her exploration of ecological and social issues render the series relevant beyond its fantasy trappings. Her emphasis on balance and harmony resonates in today's climate-conscious and socially aware discourse.

Representation and Inclusivity

In later works, Le Guin addressed gender and societal issues more explicitly, making her stories more inclusive and reflective of diverse perspectives.

Educational Use

Tales of Earthsea remains a staple in academic settings for its literary merit, philosophical insights, and cultural significance. Its themes serve as compelling material for discussions on ethics, identity, and environmental stewardship.

Conclusion

Tales of Earthsea stands as a testament to Ursula K. Le Guin's literary genius and philosophical depth. It transcends traditional fantasy by weaving complex themes of morality, identity, and ecological balance into a richly imagined universe. Its influence persists, inspiring generations of writers and readers to consider the profound truths about ourselves and the world we inhabit.

Whether approached as a series of captivating tales or as a philosophical inquiry into human nature, Earthsea remains a timeless and vital work—a true masterpiece in the canon of speculative fiction.

[Tales Of The Earthsea](#)

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tales of the earthsea: *Studio Ghibli Animation as Adaptations* Dominic J. Nardi, Keli Fancher, 2025-05-15 This collection investigates how Hayao Miyazaki, Isao Takahata, and other Studio Ghibli storytellers have approached the process of reimagining literary sources for animation. Studio Ghibli is renowned for its original storytelling in films like *My Neighbor Totoro*, but many of its most famous films, including *Howl's Moving Castle* and *Ponyo*, have their origins in pre-existing novels, manga, or fairy tales. Studio Ghibli's adaptations seldom directly translate source material to animation, but instead transform the works to incorporate themes or imagery central to the studio's sensibilities. *Studio Ghibli Animation as Adaptations* explores how these adaptations often blur genre boundaries and raise questions about what constitutes fidelity to source material. The collection also shows how the studio reinterprets and recontextualizes stories across cultures for Japanese audiences and across mediums like manga.

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tales of the earthsea: *The Lives of Texts* Andrzej Kowalczyk, Katarzyna Pisarska, 2014-07-24 *The Lives of Texts: Exploring the Metaphor* examines various instances of “textual subsistence” implied by the title. Drawing on the parallel between a text and a living organism, the contributors analyze various literary texts ranging from the Middle Ages to postmodernity, as well as film adaptations and the graphic novel. Apart from the works of canonical writers, attention is also drawn to some long-forgotten authors, along with the most recent instances of popular literature and culture. The exploration of the title metaphor allows the contributors to trace life-like phenomena (e.g. textual birth, maturation, dissemination, death and resurrection) in the texts of writers so remote from each other as Layamon, Thomas More, Mary Shelley, Charles Williams, Ursula Le Guin, A. S. Byatt, Peter Ackroyd, Iain Banks, J. K. Rowling, or Neil Gaiman.

tales of the earthsea: [Ursula K. Le Guin Beyond Genre](#) Mike Cadden, 2005-07-08 This book critically examines Le Guin's fiction for all ages, and it will be of great interest to her many admirers and to all students and scholars of children's literature.

tales of the earthsea: *The Dictionary of Made-Up Languages* Stephen D Rogers, 2011-10-15 Can you converse in Klingon? Ask an Elf the time of day? Greet a speaker of Esperanto? These are among the more than 100 constructed languages you'll find in this book. For each one, author Stephen D. Rogers provides vocabulary, grammatical features, background information on the language and its inventor, and fascinating facts. What's more, easy-to-follow guidelines show you how to construct your own made-up language--everything from building vocabulary to making up a grammar. So pick up this dictionary! In no time, you'll be telling your friends, Tsun oe nga-hu ni-Na'vi pangkxo a fi-'u oe-ru prrte' lu. (It's a pleasure to be able to chat with you in Navi.)

tales of the earthsea: **Ursula K. Le Guin** Jeremy K. Brown, 2013-11 Ursula K. Le Guin is one of the most distinctive and celebrated voices in the landscape of literature.

tales of the earthsea: *Contemporary Children's Literature and Film* Kerry Mallan, 2011-07-13 Bringing together leading and emerging scholars, this book argues for the significance of theory for reading texts written and produced for young people. Integrating perspectives from across feminism, ecocriticism, postcolonialism and poststructuralism, it demonstrates how these inform approaches to a range of contemporary literature and film.

tales of the earthsea: *Literature and the Environment* George Hart, Scott Slovic, 2004-07-30

The phrase literature and environment only achieved popularity in recent decades, yet writers dating back to the explorers of the 1500s—and later such 19th-century Romanticists as Thoreau—have long been addressing environmental issues through literary expression. This volume introduces students and educators to the field by tracing the evolution of environmental writing in the United States. Chapters written by distinguished scholars offer new perspectives on important environmental issues, guiding readers through 11 carefully selected literary works. Each chapter provides brief biographical information on the author, discussions of the work's structural, thematic, and stylistic components, and insights into the historical context that relates the work to relevant environmental issues. Each chapter concludes with information on works cited. The analyzed works cover a wide spectrum of literature and span nearly 100 years. Included are early writings, such as Mary Austin's 1903 *The Land of Little Rain*, and famous groundbreaking works, such as Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) and Gary Snyder's *Turtle Island* (1974). Also included are frequently assigned works of special interest to students, such as *The Monkey Wrench Gang* (1975), *The Earthsea Trilogy* (1977), and *Ceremony* (1977). A list of selected further suggested readings completes the volume. Students of literature, as well as educators looking for new ways to present social issues, will find many ideas and much inspiration in this volume.

tales of the earthsea: *Women in Science Fiction and Fantasy* Robin Anne Reid, 2008-12-30

Works of science fiction and fantasy increasingly explore gender issues, feature women as central characters, and are written by women writers. This book examines women's contributions to science fiction and fantasy across a range of media and genres, such as fiction, nonfiction, film, television, art, comics, graphic novels, and music. The first volume offers survey essays on major topics, such as sexual identities, fandom, women's writing groups, and feminist spirituality; the second provides alphabetically arranged entries on more specific subjects, such as Hindu mythology, Toni Morrison, magical realism, and Margaret Atwood. Entries are written by expert contributors and cite works for further reading, and the set closes with a selected, general bibliography. Students and general readers love science fiction and fantasy. And science fiction and fantasy works increasingly explore gender issues, feature women as central characters, and are written by women writers. Older works demonstrate attitudes toward women in times past, while more recent works grapple with contemporary social issues. This book helps students use science fiction and fantasy to understand the contributions of women writers, the representation of women in the media, and the experiences of women in society.

tales of the earthsea: *The Evolution of Modern Fantasy* Jamie Williamson, 2015-07-09 In this comprehensive study, Williamson traces the literary history of the fantasy genre from the eighteenth century to its coalescence following the success of Tolkien's work in the 1960s. While some studies have engaged with related material, there has been no extended study specifically exploring the roots of this now beloved genre.

tales of the earthsea: *Studio Ghibli* Rayna Denison, 2023-02-21 *Studio Ghibli: An Industrial History* takes us deep into the production world of the animation studio co-founded by Oscar-winning director Hayao Miyazaki. It investigates the production culture at Studio Ghibli and considers how the studio has become one of the world's most famous animation houses. The book breaks with the usual methods for studying Miyazaki and Ghibli's films, going beyond textual analysis to unpack the myths that have grown up around the studio during its long history. It looks back at over 35 years of filmmaking by Miyazaki and other Ghibli directors, reconsidering the studio's reputation for egalitarianism and feminism, re-examining its relationship to the art of cel and CG animation, investigating Studio Ghibli's work outside of feature filmmaking from advertising to videogames and tackling the studio's difficulties in finding new generations of directors to follow in the footsteps of Miyazaki and Isao Takahata. By reconstructing the history of Studio Ghibli through its own records, promotional documents and staff interviews, *Studio Ghibli: An Industrial History* offers a new perspective not just on Ghibli, but on the industrial history of Japanese animation.

tales of the earthsea: In the Mirror of the Past Tomasz Ratajczak, Bogdan Trocha, 2014-09-26

These days, we are ever more often confronted by overwhelming events. Searching for a way to understand them, we turn to mythic archetypes still present in our culture. The authors of these essays pose questions about the reliability of the archetypes found in tradition, history, and scattered mythologemes. The essays in this collection deal with the presence of mythic time in modern speculative fiction, such as fantasy and alternate histories, and discuss major mythologemes and their functions in popular literature and extra-literary reality. The authors show how mythopoeic fiction becomes a (genetically) modified mythic mirror in which we hope to see answers to vexing questions, or just a reality superior to the ordinary one. *In the Mirror of the Past: Of Fantasy and History* is a collection of seven essays by American and Polish authors, including Brian Attebery, Terri Doughty, and Marek Oziewicz, with Mircea Eliade's concept of "return from history to History" as their underlying theme.

tales of the earthsea: *Focus On: 100 Most Popular Fantasy Anime and Manga* Wikipedia contributors,

tales of the earthsea: *The Sidekick Comes of Age* Stephen M. Zimmerly, 2019-04-09

Literary sidekicks like Dr. Watson and Robin the Boy Wonder have not been the singular subject of a significant critical study—until now. Using young adult literature (YA) to study the sidekick reveals new and exciting ways to understand these kinds of characters and this kind of literature. YA has embraced the sidekick, recognizing the way the character reflects the importance of growth and finding one's place in the world. The nature of many YA texts allows sidekicks to grow beyond literary or historical origins. This includes letting sidekicks "evolve" over the course of multiple texts, using parallel novels to add complexity to a sidekick's characterization, and telling a story from the sidekick's perspective, paradoxically making the sidekick the hero. A singularly focused and prolonged study helps to establish sidekick scholarship as a burgeoning field in and of itself.

tales of the earthsea: *The Year's Best Science Fiction: Nineteenth Annual Collection*

Gardner Dozois, 2002-07-23 The twenty-first century has so far proven to be exciting and wondrous and filled with challenges we had never dreamed. New possibilities previously unimagined appear almost daily . . . and science fiction stories continue to explore those possibilities with delightful results: Collected in this anthology are such compelling stories as: *On K2* with Kanakaredes by Dan Simmons. A relentlessly paced and absorbing tale set in the near future about three mountain climbers who must scale the face of K2 with some very odd company. *The Human Front* by Ken MacLeod. In this compassionate coming-of-age tale the details of life are just a bit off from things as we know them-and nothing is as it appears to be. *Glacial* by Alastair Reynolds. A fascinating discovery on a distant planet leads to mass death and a wrenching mystery as spellbinding as anything in recent short fiction. The twenty-six stories in this collection imaginatively takes us far across the universe, into the very core of our beings, to the realm of the gods, and the moment just after now. Included here are the works of masters of the form and of bright new talents, including: Eleanor Arnason Chris Beckett Michael Blumlein Michael Cassutt Brenda W. Clough Paul Di Filippo Andy Duncan Carolyn Ives Gilman Jim Grimsley Simon Ings James Patrick Kelly Leigh Kennedy Nancy Kress Ian R. MacLeod Ken MacLeod Paul J. McAuley Maureen F. McHugh Robert Reed Alastair Reynolds Geoff Ryman William Sanders Dan Simmons Allen M. Steele Charles Stross Michael Swanwick Howard Waldrop Supplementing the stories are the editor's insightful summation of the year's events and a lengthy list of honorable mentions, making this book a valuable resource in addition to serving as the single best place in the universe to find stories that stir the imagination and the heart.

tales of the earthsea: *Folktales and Fairy Tales* Anne E. Duggan Ph.D., Donald Haase Ph.D., Helen J. Callow, 2016-02-12 Encyclopedic in its coverage, this one-of-a-kind reference is ideal for students, scholars, and others who need reliable, up-to-date information on folk and fairy tales, past and present. Folktales and fairy tales have long played an important role in cultures around the world. They pass customs and lore from generation to generation, provide insights into the peoples who created them, and offer inspiration to creative artists working in media that now include

television, film, manga, photography, and computer games. This second, expanded edition of an award-winning reference will help students and teachers as well as storytellers, writers, and creative artists delve into this enchanting world and keep pace with its past and its many new facets. Alphabetically organized and global in scope, the work is the only multivolume reference in English to offer encyclopedic coverage of this subject matter. The four-volume collection covers national, cultural, regional, and linguistic traditions from around the world as well as motifs, themes, characters, and tale types. Writers and illustrators are included as are filmmakers and composers—and, of course, the tales themselves. The expert entries within volumes 1 through 3 are based on the latest research and developments while the contents of volume 4 comprises tales and texts. While most books either present readers with tales from certain countries or cultures or with thematic entries, this encyclopedia stands alone in that it does both, making it a truly unique, one-stop resource.

tales of the earthsea: *Beasts at Bedtime* Liam Heneghan, 2018-05-15 “[A] fresh new look at animal tales, often classic, and how they pertain to the present-day and our often fraught relationship to our environment.” —Jeff VanderMeer, author of the Southern Reach Trilogy Talking lions, philosophical bears, very hungry caterpillars, wise spiders, altruistic trees, companionable moles, urbane elephants: this is the magnificent menagerie that delights our children at bedtime. Within the entertaining pages of many children’s books, however, also lie profound teachings about the natural world that can help children develop an educated and engaged appreciation of the dynamic environment they inhabit. In *Beasts at Bedtime*, scientist (and father) Liam Heneghan examines the environmental underpinnings of children’s stories. From Beatrix Potter to Harry Potter, Heneghan unearths the universal insights into our inextricable relationship with nature that underlie so many classic children’s stories. Some of the largest environmental challenges in coming years—from climate instability, the extinction crisis, freshwater depletion, and deforestation—are likely to become even more severe as this generation of children grows up. Though today’s young readers will bear the brunt of these environmental calamities, they will also be able to contribute to environmental solutions if prepared properly. And all it takes is an attentive eye: Heneghan shows how the nature curriculum is already embedded in bedtime stories, from the earliest board books like *The Rainbow Fish* to contemporary young adult classics like *The Hunger Games*. This book enthralls as it engages. *Beasts at Bedtime* will help parents, teachers, and guardians extend those cozy times curled up together with a good book into a lifetime of caring for our planet. “*Beasts at Bedtime* is proof that most kidlit has teachable moments embedded in it.” —Toronto Star

tales of the earthsea: *Of Modern Dragons; and other essays on Genre Fiction:* John Lennard, 2016-10-09 A volume of essays exploring some of the best genre fiction of the last 40 years.

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