



The Other Wind

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Editor's Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Tehanu, Ursula Le Guin's late sequel to the renowned 'Earthsea' trilogy, was published in 1990 with the subtitle 'The Last Book of Earthsea'. The valediction was obviously premature, because twelve years on here is another 'Earthsea' novel, this time reaching what seems inescapable closure. Each of these two afterthoughts seems influenced by changes in the real world. Tehanu was written under the influence of the feminist movement. The Other Wind is more confident and relaxed about the altered status of women, but it is a highly political novel, mirroring in the fantasy world of Earthsea our contemporary concerns with ethical and religious dilemmas, and the dangerous advance of human control over natural biological processes. As this will suggest, The Other Wind is not an easy book. Caught like the whole series between a prudent conservatism and a love of wild freedom, it is a profound and philosophical novel, bypassing Tehanu and developing themes from the third 'Earthsea' book, The Farthest Shore. Readers unfamiliar with the first four books will find it hard going, perhaps impenetrable, but the many devotees of Le Guin's classic fantasy will find that it brings the whole work (as Tehanu did not) to a deeply satisfying close.

Running Order:

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