

BOOKS

Orrec will tell stories, though, and *Gifts* is ultimately a lovely, spooky history of the stories Orrec knows, lives and learns. It begins at the end and makes its way back around, through the tales Orrec heard as a child of Blind Caddard, a man whose gift of undoing was so strong he chose to blind himself rather than use it, and into the stories Orrec learns from his mother, who came from the Lowlands. Orrec is slow to come into his gift, reluctant to use it, and with good cause: The undoing leaves a sack of meat instead of a living creature. Driven too hard by his father, Orrec burns with fury in a clearing, unwilling to use his gift and thus unable to control it. Nothing remains but dead animals, dry grass and a split, charred tree.

And so Orrec retreats to the dark, living with a blindfold tied around his head.

Everyone fears his wild gift, but fear begets hatred, none so strong as that of the neighboring Drummant clan. As Orrec comes to terms with his gift, so does gentle, reticent Gry with hers, and the two of them begin to doubt that the gifts are being used as they were intended.

Orrec's voice is clear and simple, the narration of a practical young man finding the strength to shape his life without using a dangerous power or being who anyone else expects him to be. It's a timely story and a lovely one, even when the darker uses of the gifts make a reader's skin crawl. Le Guin's talent for telling a tale for all ears and eyes is as strong as ever; don't write off this remarkable book simply because you'd have to look in a different section to find it. **EW**

BOOK NOTES

William L. Sullivan discusses and shows slides for *100 Hikes in the Central Oregon Cascades*, 7 pm 6/16 at Barnes & Noble ... **David McCullough** (1776) reads, 7:30 pm 6/17 at First Congregational Church, Portland. \$12, \$8 stu., sr. ... **Dorothy Morrison** (*Everyday Sun Magic*) reads, 7 pm 6/18 at Mother Kali's ... **Adam Fawer** (*Improbable*) and **James Rollins** (*Map of Bones*) read, 7:30 pm 6/20 at Powell's on Burnside, Portland ... 6th Biennial Conference of the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment (ASLE) at the UO, June 21-26. Speakers include **Ursula K. Le Guin**, **David Suzuki**, **Elizabeth Woody**, **Kathleen Dean Moore** and **John Daniel**. 346-3938 for information ... **Michael Cunningham** (*Specimen Days*) reads, 7:30 pm 6/21 at Powell's on Burnside, Portland ... **John Seed** (co-author of *Thinking Like a Mountain: Towards a Council of All Beings*) appears at 7 pm 6/23 at the EMU, UO ... **Andrew Carroll** (*Behind the Lines*) reads, 7:30 pm 6/23 at Powell's on Burnside, Portland ... **Roberta Price** (*Huerfano*) reads, 7:30 pm 6/23 at Powell's on Hawthorne, Portland ... **Norm Stamper** (*Breaking Rank*) reads, 7:30 pm 6/24 at Powell's on Burnside, Portland ... Oregon Writers Colony presents **Jay Lake**, 7 pm 6/27 at Powell's in Beaverton ... **Martin Sherwin** (*American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of Robert J. Oppenheimer*) reads, 7:30 pm 6/28 at Powell's on Burnside, Portland ... **Shannon Applegate** (*Living Among Headstones*) reads, 7:30 pm 6/30 at Powell's on Hawthorne, Portland ... **Sam Brumbaugh** (*Goodbye, Goodness*) with musician Stephen Malkmus, 7:30 pm 6/30 at Powell's on Burnside, Portland.



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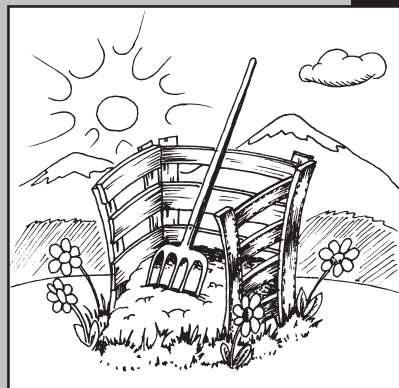
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- 1pm-2pm -- Compost Tea ... What is it? Why use it? With Growing Solutions representatives
- OSU Lane County Master Composters on hand to answer questions
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