

# The Magic of Recluce (Recluce series, Book 1)

To Download this book in many format Visit :

<https://wocoentala.org/source1/11b30200dd168e982b047b282e8113e9>

---

L.E. Modesitt, Jr.'s The Magic of Recluce begins his bestselling fantasy series the Saga of Recluce, which is one of the most popular in contemporary epic fantasy.

Young Lerris yearns to find a place in the world better suited to his skills and temperament. In Recluce this means taking one of two options: permanent exile from Recluce or the dangergeld, a complex, rule-laden wanderjahr in the lands beyond. Many do not survive.

Lerris chooses dangergeld.

Lerris will need magic in the lands beyond, where the power of the Chaos Wizards reigns unchecked, and he must learn to use his powers in an orderly way before his wanderjahr, or fall prey to Chaos.

Saga of Recluce

#1 The Magic of Recluce / #2 The Towers of Sunset / #3 The Magic Engineer / #4 The Order War / #5 The Death of Chaos / #6 Fall of Angels / #7 The Chaos Balance / #8 The White Order / #9 Colors of Chaos / #10 Magi'i of Cyador / #11 Scion of Cyador / #12 Wellspring of Chaos / #13 Ordermaster / #14 Natural Order Mage / #15 Mage-Guard of Hamor / #16 Arms-Commander / #17 Cyador's Heirs / #18 Heritage of Cyador / #19 The Mongrel Mage / #20 Outcasts of Order / #21 The Mage-Fire War (forthcoming)

Story Collection: Recluce Tales

Other Series by L.E. Modesitt, Jr.

The Imager Portfolio

The Corean Chronicles

The Spellsong Cycle

The Ghost Books

The Ecolitan Matter

L. E. MODESITT, JR. is the bestselling author of more than seventy novels encompassing two science fiction series, the Ghost Books and the Ecolitan Matter, and four fantasy series, the Imager Portfolio, the Saga of Recluce, the Spellsong Cycle and the Corean Chronicles. He lives in Cedar City, Utah.

|

Growing up, I always wondered why everything in Wander-naught seemed so dull. Not that I minded the perfectly baked bread routinely produced by my father or by Aunt Elisabet, and I certainly enjoyed the intricately carved toys and other gifts that Uncle Sardit miraculously presented on my birthday or on the High Holidays.

Perfection, especially for a youngster learning about it from cheerfully sober adults, has a price. Mine was boredom, scarcely novel for a young man in the middle of his second decade. But boredom leads to trouble, even when things are designed to be as perfect as possible. Of course, the perfection and striving for perfection that marked the island,

though some would term Recluce a smallish continent, had a reason. A good reason, but one hardly acceptable to a restless young man.

"Perfection, Lerris," my father repeated time after time, "is the price we pay for the good life. Perfection keeps destruction away and provides a safe harbor for the good."

"But why? And how?" Those were always my questions.

Finally, shortly after I finished the minimum formal schooling, in my case at fifteen, my mother entered the discussion.

"Lerris, there are two fundamental forces in life, and in nature. Creation and destruction. Creation is order. We attempt to maintain it--"

"You sound just like Magister Kerwin... Order is all that keeps chaos at bay...because evil and chaos are so closely linked, one should avoid all but the most necessary acts of destruction... I know perfection is important. I know it. I know it! And I know it! But why does it have to be so flaming boring?"

She shrugged. "Order is not boring. You are bored with order." She looked at my father.

"Since you are bored with us, and since you are not quite ready for the possibility of undertaking the dangergeld, how would you like to spend a year or so learning about woodworking with your Uncle Sardit?"

"Donara?" asked my father, obviously questioning my mother's volunteering of his sister's husband.

"Sardit and I have talked it over, Gunnar. He's willing to take on the challenge."

"Challenge?" I blurted. "What challenge? I can learn anything..."

"For about the first three weeks," my father commented.

"It's not as though you will ever be a master woodworker, Lerris," added mother. "But the general skills and discipline will come in useful when you undertake your dangergeld."

"Me? Why would I ever go tramping off through the wild lands?"

"You will."

"Most assuredly."

But the only thing that was assured then was that I would have the chance to learn how to craft some of the screens, tables, chairs, and cabinets that Uncle Sardit produced. Every once in a while, I knew, someone traveled from Candar or even from one of the trading cities of Austra to purchase one of his screens or inlaid tables.

Until I had a better idea of what I really wanted to do in life, woodworking was better than helping my father keep all the stonework spotless or mixing clays or tending the kiln fire for mother. Although the same traders who visited Sardit also visited my mother's shop, I did not have the touch for pottery. Besides, pots and vases bored me. So did the intricacies of glazes and finishes.

So, within days I had left the neat and rambling timbered and stone house where I had grown up, where I had looked out through the blue-tinted casement window in my bedroom on the herb garden for the last time. Then, I had walked nearly empty-handed the half-day to my uncle's where I was installed in the apprentice's quarters over the carpentry. Uncle Sardit's other apprentice, Koldar, had almost completed his term and was building his own house, with the help of an apprentice stonemason, a woman named Corso. She was bigger than either of us, but she smiled a lot, and she and Koldar made a good pair. He was living in the unfinished house alone, but probably not for long. That meant that until another apprentice came along I had the privacy and the responsibility of the shop in evenings.

Still, it had been a small shock to realize that I would not be living in the guest room at Uncle Sardit's, but in the much smaller and sparsely-furnished apprentice's space. The only furniture was the bed, an old woven rug, and a single hanging lamp. The plain red-oak walls scarcely showed even hairline cracks where the boards joined. The polished floors, also red oak, displayed the same care and crafting.

"That's what you're here for, Lerris. When you learn how, you can make your own tables, benches, chairs, in the evenings. Have to fell your own wood and make arrangements with Halprin at the sawmill for the rough stock to replace what's been seasoned unless you want to try to cut and rough-cure the logs yourself. Don't recommend that."

Sardit as a craft-master was a bit different than as an uncle.

I was going to learn about carpentry, and tools, and how to make screens and cabinets and tables, right? Not exactly. To begin with, it was just like the pottery shop, but worse. I'd heard about clays and consistencies and glazes and firing temperatures for years. I hadn't realized that woodworking was similar--not until Uncle Sardit reminded me forcefully.

"How are you going to use tools properly, boy, if you don't know anything about the woods you're working with?"

With that, he sat me down with his old apprentice notes on woods. Each day, either after work or before we opened the shop in the morning, I had to show him my own hand-copied notes on at least two kinds of trees, the recommended uses, curing times, and general observations on the best uses of the wood. Not only that, but each card went into a file box, the one thing he had let me make, with some advice from him, and I was expected to update the cards if I learned something of value in a day's work on a wood.

"What did you write down on the black oak? Here, let me see." He scratched his head. "You spent all day helping me smooth that piece, and the wood told you nothing?"

Once in a while, I saw Koldar grinning sympathetically from whatever project he was handling. But we didn't talk much because Uncle Sardit kept me busy, and because Koldar mostly worked alone, just checking with Uncle Sardit from time to time.

After a while, Uncle Sardit even nodded once or twice when reviewing my cards. But the frowns and questions were always more frequent. And as soon as I thought I understood something well enough to avoid his questions, he would task me with learning some other obscure discipline of woodworking. If it weren't the trees, it was their bark. If it weren't their bark, it was the recommended cutting times and sawmill techniques. If it weren't one type of wood, it was what types you could match in inlays, what differences in grain widths meant. Some of it made sense, but a lot seemed designed to make woodworking as complicated as possible.

"Complicated? Of course it's complicated. Perfection is always complicated. Do you want your work to last? Or do you want it to fall apart at the first touch of chaos?"

"But we don't even have any white magicians in Recluce."

"We don't? Are you sure about that?"

There wasn't much I could say to that. Practicing magicians, at least the white ones who used chaos, were strongly discouraged by the masters. And what the masters discouraged generally stayed discouraged, although there seemed to be only a few masters for all the towns in Recluce.

I guess my old teacher, Magister Kerwin, actually was a master, although we didn't usually think of magisters as masters. They were both part of the same order. Magisters were those who actually taught.

So...I kept studying woods, trees, and tools, and after nearly a year began to make a few simple items.

"Breadboards?"

"Someone has to make them. And they should be made right. You can do it well enough to keep chaos at bay, and you can select from any of my designs or try one of your own. If you do your own, let's go over it together before you begin cutting."

I did one of my own--simple, but with an octagonal shape.

"Simple, but nice, Lerris. You may actually have a future as a wood crafter."

From breadboards, I went to other simple items--outdoor benches for a caf  , a set of plain bookcases for the school. Nothing with carving, although I had begun to do carving for my own furniture, and Uncle Sardit had even admitted that the wooden armchair I had built for my quarters would not have been out of place in most homes.

"Most homes. Not quite clean enough, and a few rough spots with the spoke-joining angles, but, on the whole, a credible effort."

That was about the most I ever got in praise from Uncle Sardit.

But I was still bored, even as I continued to learn

Copyright   1991 by L. E. Modesitt, Jr.

Other Books

What Do I Read Next? 93.

          .