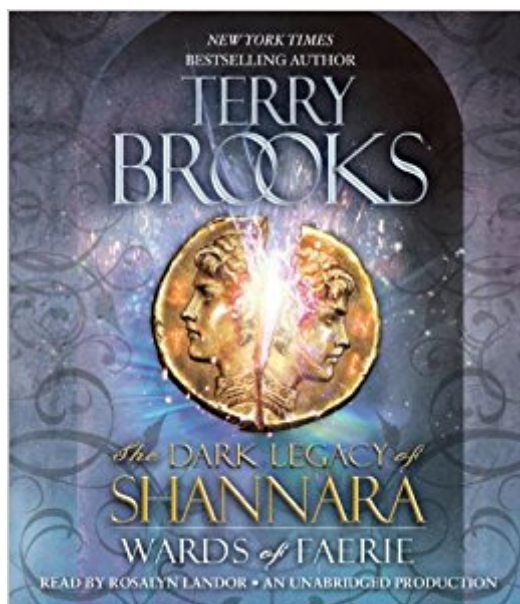


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Wards Of Faerie: The Dark Legacy Of Shannara



Synopsis

Seven years after the conclusion of the High Druid of Shannara trilogy, New York Times bestselling author Terry Brooks at last revisits one of the most popular eras in the legendary epic fantasy series that has spellbound readers for more than three decades. **When the world was young, and its name was Faerie, the power of magic ruled—and the Elfstones warded the race of Elves and their lands, keeping evil at bay. But when an Elven girl fell hopelessly in love with a Darkling boy of the Void, he carried away more than her heart.** Thousands of years later, tumultuous times are upon the world now known as the Four Lands. Users of magic are in conflict with proponents of science. Elves have distanced their society from the other races. The dwindling Druid order and its teachings are threatened with extinction. A sinister politician has used treachery and murder to rise as prime minister of the mighty Federation. Meanwhile, poring through a long-forgotten diary, the young Druid Aphenglow Elessedil has stumbled upon the secret account of an Elven girl's heartbreak and the shocking truth about the vanished Elfstones. But never has a little knowledge been so very dangerous—as Aphenglow quickly learns when she's set upon by assassins. Yet there can be no turning back from the road to which fate has steered her. For whoever captures the Elfstones and their untold powers will surely hold the advantage in the devastating clash to come. But Aphenglow and her allies—Druids, Elves, and humans alike—remember the monstrous history of the Demon War, and they know that the Four Lands will never survive another reign of darkness. But whether they themselves can survive the attempt to stem that tide is another question entirely. **[Terry Brooks is] the most important fantasy writer since J.R.R. Tolkien.** **Rocky Mountain News**

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Customer Reviews

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Terry Brooks is the New York Times bestselling author of more than thirty books, including the Dark Legacy of Shannara adventure *Wards of Faerie*; the Legends of Shannara novels *Bearers of the Black Staff* and *The Measure of the Magic*; the Genesis of Shannara trilogy: *Armageddon*, *Children*, *The Elves of Cintra*, and *The Gypsy Morph*; *The Sword of Shannara*; the Voyage of the Jerle Shannara trilogy: *Ilse Witch*, *Antrax*, and *Morgawr*; the High Druid of Shannara trilogy: *Jarka Ruus*, *Tanequil*, and *Straken*; the nonfiction book *Sometimes the Magic Works: Lessons from a Writing Life*; and the novel based upon the screenplay and story by George Lucas, *Star Wars: Episode I The Phantom Menace*. His novels *Running with the Demon* and *A Knight of the Word* were selected by the Rocky Mountain News as two of the best science fiction/fantasy novels of the twentieth century. The author was a practicing attorney for many years but now writes full-time. He lives with his wife, Judine, in the Pacific Northwest.

I'm re-reading this series and this is another good book in the series with only a few minor issues. I believe the author has written himself into a corner and while I really enjoy the story, I think he needed to handle these few elements better. I really like seeing what's become of the druids and all the call backs to previous books, but like I said, there are a few things that I would have like to have seen done better. I'll try to talk about these without giving anything away. For one, the airships are cool and he's done a good job with them so far. I've always had a problem with this series concept of distance. They can basically travel from one side of the country to the other in about 3 days. Granted, from what we know now about where the four lands are located, it's probably not that big,

but it should take longer than that. I live in a fairly small town and it would take me at least 3-4 hours to walk at a moderate pace from one side to the other. I guess you have to look at it from the perspective that he might be cutting out boring travel scenes, but it still bothers me. Now he has these air ships that allow him to travel further faster and it's seemed to have caused him problems. They use them to flit around and have their adventures, but when he needs to split the group up, he comes up with what is basically a rock wall of prison bars their ship can't get through. Based on earlier writing, they should have been able to fly over anything that could reasonably support itself in this geological formation. It was a weak excuse to separate the groups and cause some of them hardships. In the same vein and at about the same time, they send one character back to the first group for no good reason, other than that he'll be needed by the other group later in the story. As far as the logic of the story goes, it was stupid to send him away. I could have accepted it if they'd given some flimsy reason for it, but it was basically do it because I said so. There were other places where he handled issues like that well. I don't think I'll spoil anything by telling anyone that there is an Ohmsford involved in this set. They have been present in every set in this series so far, along with druids, moor cats, and the Leah family. The only problem is that there is really no discernible reason for them to be there. In the other sets, there was an absolutely imperative reason that they be there. That's not the case, here, however. They become very useful later, but there is no reason for them at the beginning. However, the author does a good job of giving a very acceptable reason for them to be there. You'll find that out when you read it. The only other thing I noticed was that some of the foreshadowing was a little on the nose. Kind of like when you're watching a horror movie and they're headed into the scary house. One character is scared and the other teases them, saying "Don't loose your head over it, ya chicken". You know that their head is coming off before the end of the movie. I saw 2-3 places where it was that bad in this book. I'm not usually one to catch that kind of thing, so there may be several other places where it was well done and I missed it. So having said all that, it might sound like I didn't like the book, but I really did. It's a good story that I didn't want to put down. It gives you more great characters and awesome callbacks. While you're reading, those things I mentioned barely register to you. I'm glad it's out there and I'm going to finish the series. I just hope those things disappear and he gets back on point with the great writing he's done previously.

I was introduced to the Shannara books as a teenager, and I can honestly say it was a transformative experience, maybe even more so than "The Lord of the Rings," which I had to become an adult to appreciate properly. I have about, oh, 9 of Brooks's books sitting on my shelves,

all looking very well-thumbed. But then I moved on and haven't read any of his stuff for a while. Every time I look at those books I think maybe I should re-read them, but then I worry that I won't like them as much as I did then, and a key adolescent experience will be forever tainted for me. So it was with some reluctance and trepidation that I began "Wards of Faerie," which I picked up somewhat at random when I saw it was on sale. Things, I soon discovered, have moved on in the Four Lands since I last visited (airships?! Who saw that coming?!), and this book is both almost too familiar and yet too different than the beloved books of my teenage years, and yet, and yet... And yet I zoomed through the entire thing in a couple of sittings, totally enthralled and unable to turn away. I still love the Four Lands, it turns out, and Brooks still retains his old storytelling magic. No, he isn't the most elegant prose stylist, but somehow his fantasy worlds are so vivid, his characters so compelling, and his storylines so gripping that I was utterly hooked anyway. This book is a bit more mature than a lot of the earlier books I read--there is less focus on adolescent boys crashing around in the woods (although that element is still certainly there) and more about grown women searching through archives--but I'm a bit more mature too, so that's all fine. Bottom line: I'm not sure this is quite the classic that "Sword of Shannara" was (what could be?), but if you're a Brooksophile like I am, chances are good you'll enjoy this book, and if you've just discovered Brooks, it may turn you into a fan.

It has been many years since I read a Shannara book, but this felt like coming home. Maybe this break blinded me from seeing the criticisms raised in other reviews, but I fully enjoyed this book. The story starts off with Aphenglow Elessedil, granddaughter of the current Elven king and more importantly a Druid, finding a lost diary of an Elven princess, from thousands of years ago. In the diary, the princess describes how she lost the Elfstones, except for the blue ones. Aphen takes this discovery to Kyber Elessedin, current leader of the druids. Kyber determines that Elfstones must be found, sending druids to look for help and Aphen back to Arbolon to try and look for more information. Injured from several attacks while in Arbolon, Aphen is sidelined from the quest for searching for the missing Elfstones. One main character introduced later in book is Drust Chazhul, the leader of the Human Federation and a fairly two dimensional character, especially for a protagonist. He is Machiavellian at best or pure evil at worse. He plans to take over the Four Lands, starting with the elimination of the Druids. Once all the players are introduced and set into motion, things quickly spiral downwards. I need to read the rest of the trilogy to find the upswing.

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