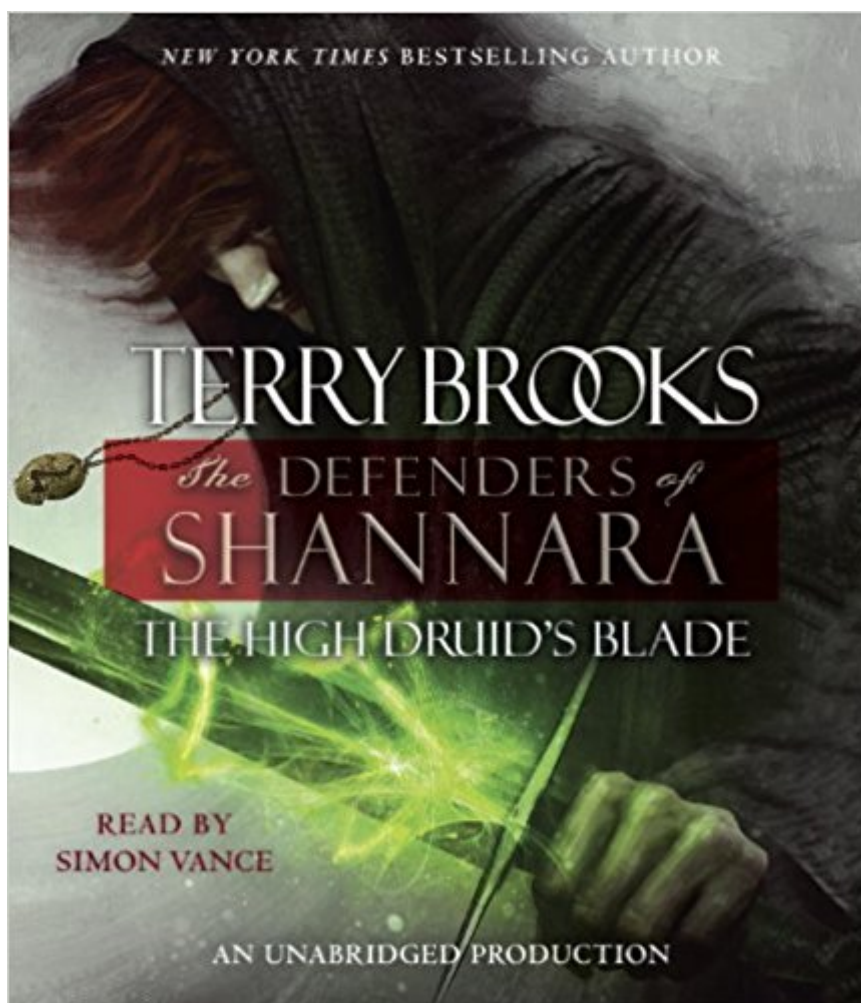




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The High Druid's Blade: The Defenders Of Shannara



Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER Legend has it that Paxon Leah is descended from the royals and warriors who once ruled the Highlands and waged war with magical weapons. But those kings, queens, and heroes are long gone, and there is nothing enchanted about the antique sword that hangs above Paxon's fireplace. Running his family's modest shipping business, Paxon leads a quiet life until extraordinary circumstances overturn his simple world . . . and rewrite his destiny. When his brash young sister is abducted by a menacing stranger, Paxon races to her rescue with the only weapon he can find. And in a harrowing duel, he is stunned to discover powerful magic unleashed within him and within his ancestors' ancient blade. But his formidable new ability is dangerous in untrained hands, and Paxon must master it quickly because his nearly fatal clash with the dark sorcerer Arcannen won't be his last. Leaving behind home and hearth, he journeys to the keep of the fabled Druid order to learn the secrets of magic and earn the right to become their sworn protector. But treachery is afoot deep in the Druids' ranks. And the blackest of sorcery is twisting a helpless innocent into a murderous agent of evil. To halt an insidious plot that threatens not only the Druid order but all the Four Lands, Paxon Leah must summon the profound magic in his blood and the legendary mettle of his elders in the battle fate has chosen him to fight.

Praise for *The High Druid's Blade*

“High adventure, lots of action, and appealing [characters] . . . a good place for new readers to jump into the author's world.” —*Library Journal*

“Terry Brooks is a grandmaster of the fantasy genre, and his latest will both captivate and surprise readers. . . . It's truly magical.” —*Associated Press*

“Brooks once again gifts readers with a breathless adventure in this new Shannara trilogy, the *Defenders of Shannara*. The action begins in the first chapter and doesn't end until the last page.” —*RT Book Reviews*

“A great place to introduce yourself to all of Brooks' novels . . . [The High Druid's Blade] is a great stand-alone book and will definitely throw you headfirst into the world of Shannara.” —*Whedonopolis*

“The High Druid's Blade is an intriguing, action-filled novel that you are sure to love.” —*Faire Fair Book Reviews*

“Readers both new [and old] will enjoy reading The High Druid's Blade.” —*The Arched Doorway*

“An enjoyable read . . . I will definitely be picking up the next book when it comes out.” —*Jessie Reads Everything*

Praise for Terry Brooks

“The *Sword of Shannara* is an unforgettable and wildly entertaining epic, animated by Terry Brooks' cosmically generative imagination and storytelling joy.” —*Karen Russell*, New York Times bestselling author of

Swamplandia! [↗](#) [↗](#) [↗](#) “If Tolkien is the grandfather of modern fantasy, Terry Brooks is its favorite uncle.” [↗](#) •Peter V. Brett, New York Times bestselling author of *The Desert Spear* [↗](#) [↗](#) [↗](#) “I can’t even begin to count how many of Terry Brooks’s books I’ve read (and reread) over the years. From *Shannara* to *Landover*, his work was a huge part of my childhood.” [↗](#) •Patrick Rothfuss, New York Times bestselling author of *The Name of the Wind* From the Hardcover edition.

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Praise for *The High Druid's Blade* [↗](#) “High adventure, lots of action, and appealing [characters] . . . a good place for new readers to jump into the author’s world.” [↗](#) •Library Journal [↗](#) “Terry Brooks is a grandmaster of the fantasy genre, and his latest will both captivate and surprise readers. . . . It’s truly magical.” [↗](#) •Associated Press [↗](#) “Brooks once again gifts readers with a breathless adventure in this new *Shannara* trilogy, the *Defenders of Shannara*. The action begins in the first chapter and doesn’t end until the last page.” [↗](#) •RT Book Reviews [↗](#) “A great place to introduce yourself to all of Brooks’s novels . . . [*The High Druid's Blade*] is a great stand-alone book and will definitely throw you headfirst into the world of *Shannara*.” [↗](#) •Whedonopolis [↗](#) “The High Druid’s Blade is an intriguing, action-filled novel that you are sure to love.” [↗](#) •Faire’s Fair Book

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•Patrick Rothfuss, New York Times bestselling author of The Name of the Wind

“Terry Brooks is a master of the craft and a trailblazer who established fantasy as a viable genre. He is required reading.”

•Brent Weeks, New York Times bestselling author of The Night Angel Trilogy

“The Shannara books were among the first to really capture my imagination. My daydreams and therefore my stories will always owe a debt to Terry Brooks.”

•Brandon Mull, #1 New York Times bestselling author of the Beyonders and Fablehaven series

From the Hardcover edition.

Terry Brooks is the New York Times bestselling author of more than thirty books, including the Dark Legacy of Shannara adventures Wards of Faerie, Bloodfire Quest, and Witch Wraith; the Legends of Shannara novels Bearers of the Black Staff and The Measure of the Magic; the Genesis of Shannara trilogy: Armageddon’s 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: A New Hope 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 lives with his wife, Judine, in the Pacific Northwest.

I think this book was just all right and is not something crucial to the ongoing Shannara saga. It was a mildly interesting read that ultimately felt to me like something you’d read to fill in time between other books, and indeed I read most of it using the Kindle app on my iPad while I had my car

serviced and I waited at the mechanic. Other people have noted the story feels largely unfinished, and I agree with them. Terry Brooks usually publishes his work using a "trilogy" model (one I find utterly unnecessary) and he usually ends the first book of a trilogy with some sort of cliffhanger to make you want to come back to find out what happened. There's no cliffhanger ending here, but the door remains open for further exploration of these characters because the antagonist escapes. I don't know whether that's simply Mr. Brooks giving himself an opening to continue this storyline if reader response is positive or if the creative muse strikes him or whether it's a way to set up something larger in the future (after all, the previous trilogy, "Dark Legacy of Shannara," which was set chronologically prior to this book, left a couple of huge openings as well, so perhaps he intends to unify the storylines). I also note the subtitle "The Defenders of Shannara" sounds like part of a new trilogy name, much like "The Heritage of Shannara" quartet some 30 years ago or "High Druid of Shannara" more recently. Ultimately, though, this book felt unsatisfying to me. I never felt the characters were in much danger and I don't feel they were tested all that much. No doubt the volume's short length is one reason for that, but when I hit my Kindle's "Home" button after finishing the book, I found myself simply saying "ehhhh." I don't feel it added anything to the Shannara saga, but I don't feel it detracted either. The characters may have had potential, but the potential is unrealized and unexplored in such a short story. As I say, it's a decent enough book if you've read the rest of the Shannara books and you need something to read to fill some time. It'd be an ideal book to read on the subway or on a flight somewhere. But I certainly encourage new readers not to start with this book but instead to go back to the beginning with "The Sword of Shannara." Three stars to denote a book that's just average, similar to the "Gentleman's 'C'" some college professors give. Edited to add: After posting this review, I visited Terry Brooks's website and I see he plans to release two more books "loosely connected" to this one in 2015 and 2016. Perhaps those will resolve some of the issues I mention above.

After hearing all the rave for Terry Brooks's novels I decided to give it a try; after reading this book I can see why people hold him in such high regard. This was my first Shannara book and I had no idea what to expect. I was completely blown away at the world the author created. It was highly detailed, had a lot of history and a magic system that felt real. It was apparent from the beginning that this was an old land with a lot of story to tell that stretched beyond this book. The characters were interesting but a bit predictable. The main character, Paxon, is your average, impulsive young adult who finds himself in a situation where he is forced to leave his old life behind in favor of a life of glory and struggle. He is willing to face anything in his path to save his

sister, Chrysallin; a 14-year-old damsel in distress who is given very little dialogue and spends most of the book in captivity. Her early description made her out to be a bit less interesting than I had hoped. However, that all changed with the introduction of the druids. They filled several major roles in this book and helped provide the 'magic touch' to the story. I found their culture rich and entertaining. It was obvious that they were held in either high regard or complete disgust by the other races. While this is considered Paxon's story, the plot focuses a lot of attention on the antagonist, Arcannan. A powerful sorcerer and Chrysallin's kidnapper, he is a typical bad guy who seeks after his own selfish desires. He is described as a very powerful and dark sorcerer yet I was a bit disappointed by how little of his power I got to see. I felt like he had more to show based on what he was built up to be, but he was still a dangerous and deadly character. One character who really surprised me was Mischa. A witch and Arcannan's accomplice, she was very fun to watch. There were times when I was more scared of her than I was of Arcannan. The plot moved at a good pace and carried an with it an overall sense of urgency on both sides. The author has clearly found a great template for creating a story that mixes action, world depth, a few rare moments of comedy, and some mildly disturbing events. I would not recommend this book for young readers given the nature of some of it's chapters. The magic system was easy enough to understand without needing drastic explanation. It's integration into the world felt natural and no one was 'god-like'. I felt like the struggle between good and evil was too easily won, however since this is the first book in a trilogy, I am hopeful that the remaining books will show more climactic confrontations. To sum up, I now understand why there is such a cult-following to Terry Brooks' Shannara series. His storytelling is intriguing and his world is beautiful. This book is sure to capture the attention of many readers new to the series, like it did me...

I really enjoyed these series of books! I've been reading Terry Brook's books since the days when a person used an Index Card System to find books in a library. I used to wipe out all things Terry Brooks. Unfortunately, RPG video games in the mid 90's pretty much ruined my book reading ambitions. Any who, as of late I've found myself emersed in Terry Brooks digital books via Kindle. I've found that my reading Jitsu is as strong as ever and i'm loving It! What really hits the spot for me is the numerous refrences to past story lines that make Terry Brooks novels so easy to get into and understand. Terry Brooks has that masterful ability to format every sentence, in each paragraph with in every chapter, that has the ability to capture the imagination. Very detail oriented and well thought out stories makes any Terry Brooks novel worth reading.

Good lord! I really wish Terry Brooks would come out and say that he did not write this book, it is horrible! I love the sword swinging fantasy genre but this is just awful to read. I read the reviews and didn't believe them because I'm a huge Terry Brooks fan. Believe them because it is really a bad book. It is written poorly, the characters have no development and just fill the standard cliché spots, the plot is horribly predictable, the dialogue! Oh geeze the dialogue is just horrible. This book is so bad it makes me feel like I could be a writer. How this ever was published I have no idea

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