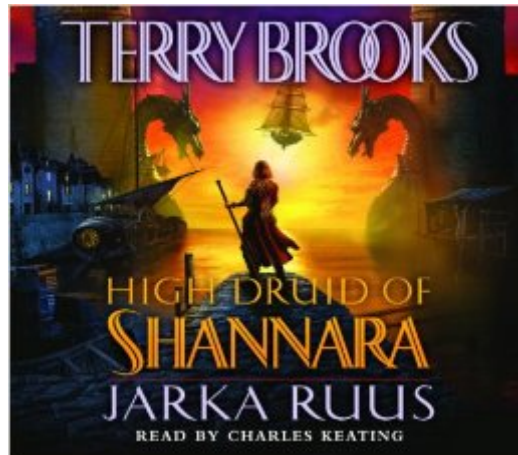


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High Druid Of Shannara: Jarka Ruus



Synopsis

Devotees of the Shannara series will delight in this sequel to *Voyage of the Jerle Shannara*: *Morgawr*. In the previous novel, the love of her courageous brother, Bek, enabled the Ilse Witch to renounce her evil existence and resume her younger identity as Grianne Ohmsford. The new book begins twenty years later, when Grianne, now head of a Druid Council formed to defend the Four Lands from anarchy and warfare, is challenged by those who cannot forget her former malevolence. When Grianne disappears, only a few loyal friends can help her escape from her prison among the Jarka Ruus. Joined by stalwarts Elf Prince Ahren Elessedil and Tagwen the dwarf, Grianne's charming nephew, Pen Ohmsford, takes the spotlight as the hero of the new trilogy.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have been a fan of Terry Brooks and the various Shannara books for 20 years, anxiously awaiting each new series in the ongoing tale. However, I must admit the last trilogy, *The Voyage of the Jerele Shannara* (TVotJS), was not up to par with the high expectations I have for Terry Brooks writings. While the trilogy did have new settings and characters I thought that many of the story plots and themes had been written about before and just redressed for this trilogy. I awaited the release of the High Druid of Shannara (THDoS) series with caution. Just a few days ago my wife purchased the first book on THDoS series for me *JARKA RUUS* (JR) and I found that Brooks had recaptured what I originally so liked about the Shannara series. In this book Brooks brings back some familiar people and places. Several characters from the TVotJS have returned. Most importantly Grianne

Ohmsford, the former Ilse Witch, in her current role as Ard Rhys the current leader of the third druid council. Grianne Ohmsford was one of my favorite characters from the TVotJS and I think she makes a great druid, much better than Walker Boh. Aside from the characters and magic that marks all his books this series has a great story, just as good as THE FIRST KING OF SHANNARA (TFKoS) and right behind THE ELFSTONES OF SHANNARA (TEoS). I have always like TEoS and there are strong links to TEoS in JR. If you have read TEoS and enjoyed reading about the different demons and wondered just what the Forbidding that held them back was about then this story will answer a lot of those questions. Also, the Warlock Lord makes a cameo appearance of sorts in this book. The only thing I did not care for in this book was the abrupt ending.

High Druid of Shannara: Book 1 Jarka Ruus is set 20 years after the conclusion of Morgawr (The Voyage of the Jerle Shannara trilogy). Grianne Ohmsford, formerly the Ilse Witch is now the High Druid (Ard Rhys) of the Third Druid Council at Paranor. Grianne faces the problem of how to make the Druid Council relevant and effective in the Four Lands. She faces skepticism from the Elves and some men, and worse, she faces schemes from some of the Druids who still do not trust her because of her past. These schemes get the best of Grianne early in the book as she is trapped in some alternate realm similar to her own world (I refuse to name it because it is a massive spoiler and there is some joy in discovering where exactly Grianne ended up). This sets up the main thrust of the novel which is the beginning of the quest to rescue Grianne. We are introduced to the hero of the novel, Pen Ohmsford. Brooks follows the formula of the Shannara series in that a new scion of the Ohmsford clan is tapped to undertake a quest of some sort. While Pen's father, Bek Ohmsford (from the Voyage trilogy) is alive and able, The King of the Silver River maintains that it is young Pen who must venture out to rescue his aunt (Grianne is Bek's sister). While Bek and Grianne have the magic of the Wishsong, Pen is a generation that has been skipped (though he wonders if the magic is just dying out). He does have his own magic, one that he does not think is as important or powerful as the Wishsong. He can empathetically understand animals. Helping Pen out in this quest are Ahren Elesedil (an elf Prince and Druid), his niece and apprentice Khyber Elesedil, and Grianne's dwarf assistant.

Grianne Ohmsford, struggling with the inner demons of her former evil life as the Ilse Witch, also wrestles with the politics of her new role as Ard Rhys, High Druid of Paranor, responsible for the unification of the third Druid Council. Peace and harmony among the races of the four lands seems a distant, faint hope as her enemies on the council, the dissenting druids led by Shadea a'Rhu,

refuse to accept the reality of Grianne's redemption and plot to bring her down, each striving to achieve their own ends and bring their own agenda to completion. When Grianne vanishes, seemingly defeated by the circle of treasonous plotters surrounding her and locked behind impenetrable magic walls in the land of the Forbidding, her trusted servant and aide, Tagwen, realizes that his own life hangs in the balance and narrowly escapes Paranor himself. Relentlessly pursued by Terek Molt, another rebellious Druid on the Council and Aphasia Wye, a deadly assassin, Tagwen seeks help from the only people he can think of - Pen Ohmsford, Grianne's resourceful, young nephew and Ahren Ellesdil, a self-exiled elf Druid and master of no small amount of magic himself! The thrilling chase is on as the Druid Council seeks to eliminate the only loose ends that can spoil their nefarious plans and Pen and Ahren seek to release Grianne from her hellish prison in The Forbidding and seal what appears to be a hole in the magic wall that might well see the re-appearance of the evil warlock in the Four Lands! With The High Druid of Shannara, Brooks has once again burst onto the fantasy scene and re-established himself as a master of the genre!

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