



Jarka Ruus (High Druid of Shannara, Book 1)

By Terry Brooks

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More than a quarter of a century after *The Sword of Shannara* carved out its place in the pantheon of great epic fantasy, the magic of Terry Brooks's *New York Times* bestselling saga burns as brightly as ever. Three complete series have chronicled the ever-unfolding history of Shannara. But more stories are still to be told—and new adventures have yet to be undertaken. Book One of High Druid of Shannara invites both the faithful longtime reader and the curious newcomer to take the first step on the next extraordinary quest.

Twenty years have passed since Grianne Ohmsford denounced her former life as the dreaded Ilse Witch—saved by the love of her brother, the magic of the Sword of Shannara, and the destruction of her evil mentor, the Morgawr. Now, fulfilling the destiny predicted for her, she has established the Third Druid Council, and dedicated herself to its goals of peace, harmony among the races, and defense of the Four Lands. But the political intrigue, secret treachery, and sinister deeds that have haunted Druid history for generations continue to thrive. And despite her devotion to the greater good as Ard Rhys—the High Druid of Paranor, Grianne still has bitter enemies.

Among the highest ranks of the Council she leads lurk those who cannot forget her reign of terror as the Ilse Witch, who covet her seat of power, and who will stop at nothing to see her deposed . . . or destroyed. Even Grianne's few allies—chief among them her trusted servant Tagwen—know of the plots against her. But they could never anticipate the sudden, ominous disappearance of the Ard Rhys, in the dead of night and without a trace. Now, barely a step ahead of the dark forces bent on stopping him, Tagwen joins Grianne's brave young nephew, Pen Ohmsford, and the wise, powerful elf Ahren Elessedil on a desperate and dangerous mission of search and rescue—to deliver the High Druid of Shannara from an unspeakable fate.

Expect no end of wonders, no shortage of adventure, exhilaration, suspense, and enchantment, as Terry Brooks demonstrates, once again, that there is no end to his magic of invention and mastery of storytelling.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

With *Jarka Ruus* Terry Brooks embarks on yet another journey with the legendary Ohmsford family. Beginning 20 years after the conclusion of the *The Voyage of the Jerle Shannara*, the High Druid of Paranor Grianne Ohmsford finds herself struggling to unite the druids amid political morass risen from her prior history as the dreaded Ilse Witch. Her enemies' schemes come to fruition quickly and she is banished behind the wall of the Forbidding, the anti-demon security feature that collapsed so spectacularly in the magnificent *Elfstones of Shannara*. Her fate falls in the lap of the youngest Ohmsford, Penderrin, who unlike his Aunt Grianne and his parents is without the gift of magic. Pen along with Khyber and her uncle, the Elven Prince Ahren Elessedil, learn they must jump through the usual Brooks' hoops to unlock the door of the Forbidding and free Grianne.

Brooks is right at home in this formulaic addition to the Shannara franchise. All the furniture is here: the Druid Keep of Paranor, dark creatures in pursuit of reluctant young heroes and, of course, the Elfstones. The good news is that Brooks remains a master of description and the book hums along with comfortable ease. Devout Shannara fans will find their favorite magical realm exactly as they left it and no doubt anticipate this cliffhanger's sequel. --*Jeremy Pugh*

From Publishers Weekly

Bestseller Brooks's first book in a new trilogy treads complacently along the well-worn path of its predecessors. Set 20 years after the conclusion (in 2002's *Morgawr*) of the three-volume *Voyage of the Jerle Shannara*, it introduces the next generation of Ohmsfords and Elessedils: Penderrin, airship-flying nephew of former Ilse Witch and now High Druid (or Ard Rhys) Grianne Ohmsford; and Khyber, the Elven Prince Ahren Elessedil's headstrong niece. Teenaged protagonists can be annoyingly clumsy, and these two are no exception. As they set out to rescue Grianne from her politically motivated imprisonment in a bleak parallel plane known only as the Forbidding, they manage to repeatedly draw the attention of their pursuers, fall inopportunistly in love and even kill a member of their own party. That neither Pen nor Khyber has the mitigating talents or charm of earlier Shannara heroes leads to the inevitable question of why exactly Fate has decreed that they should be the ones to take on this quest in the first place; a hope of learning the answer, ironically, may be the most compelling reason to anticipate the sequels. While Pen's fear that his family's magic is "thinning out" may parallel real-world criticisms of the most recent Shannara tales, Brooks does know a lot about the proper care and feeding of golden geese. Jaded readers are likely to seek their thrills elsewhere, but fans of formula fantasy will be quite content with the smooth prose, vivid descriptions and comfortable pacing.

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From [Booklist](#)

Set 20 years after the events of *Morgawr* [BKL J1 02], the conclusion of the *Voyage of the Jerle Shannara* trilogy, *Jarka Ruus* opens the High Druid of Shannara series. At the dying Druid Walker's command, Grianne Ohmsford, the former Ilse Witch, has taken on the task of rebuilding the legacy of the Druids as knowledge givers, but there are many in her ranks who fear and mistrust her and would not mind seeing her gone or dead. That being the case, her mysterious disappearance from her well-guarded bedroom puts several things in motion, among them a new quest, the search for Grianne; a new young hero, Grianne's nephew Penderrin Ohmsford, whose father, Bek, was Pen's age when he sailed aboard the *Jerle Shannara*; and a new set of companions. A familiar power, that of the Elfstones, is also on hand, now wielded by the niece of the elf Ahren Elessedil. As expected, the quest is fraught with danger, hardship, and death. As throughout the

massive Shannara saga to date, Brooks proves himself a master at reworking and enriching the conventions of fantasy while maintaining the integrity of the characteristics of elves, dwarves, humans, and the other peoples of the saga that he set up at its very beginning. A sure winner. *Sally Estes*
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Brandon Harmon:

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