



The Measure of the Magic

Terry Brooks

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THE ARMY OF DARKNESS DRAWS NEAR

Five centuries ago, a catastrophic demon war left the world in ruins. Since then, the survivors - humans, elves and other mutants - have found sanctuary in a mountain valley protected by magic. But now these protective wards have failed, and a ruthless troll army is on the brink of invasion.

In an attempt to stave off annihilation, Panterra Qu, a young Tracker struggles to control the power of the black staff - a powerful talisman passed down through the centuries by the Knights of the Word. It is their only hope for salvation - for all will pay a price if the war between the Word and the Void tips towards darkness.

The Measure of the Magic Details

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From Reader Review The Measure of the Magic for online ebook

Bonnie Colvert says

Terry Brooks has a way about his style with the magic he infuses into his epic fantasy books, no doubt about it. I have just finished reading the Measure of the Magic: Legends of Shannara that I won as an ARC here on Goodreads. Fantastic story! It is the book after the Bearers of the Black Staff. Now I must go retrieve his other series! No questions asked. I love human, elves, fae, trolls, etc. different races some coming together in time of need, others selfish only concerned with what they can get, and who to trample over to get it. I would highly recommend this fantasy story to everyone who loves this type of reading.

Ryan Lawler says

I have always been a big fan of Terry Brooks. The Shannara novels were amongst the first fantasy books that I read, and I have always turned up to the book store every August to purchase the latest offering from Brooks. There has been plenty of reason for optimism over the past 5 years – the new Landover novel and the Genesis of Shannara novels have been some of Brooks' best work, and my expectations for concluding novel in The Legends of Shannara series were very high. Unfortunately The Measure of Magic was a massive let down, a boring and uninspired conclusion to a series that failed to cash in on the superb foundations that had been laid previously.

Sider Ament has been killed. The magical veil protecting the valley has fallen, trolls have amassed outside the valley waiting for a chance to strike, and the responsibility for leading the inhabitants of the valley back into the wider world has fallen to young tracker, and newly appointed Knight of the Word, Panterra Qu. While this premise has the makings of a very exciting story, we were promised by Brooks that this series would clearly define the transition from the world of the Word/Void to the world of Shannara. It was a very bold promise that was not adequately fulfilled, and having invested so much of my time into these five transitional Shannara books, I feel like the series was cheated out of the ending it deserved.

Not only did we not get the story we wanted but the story we did get was well below par, something made more apparent given the quality Brooks has produced over the past five years. To put it a bit more bluntly I became very bored reading The Measure of Magic, which is quite concerning as I don't think I have ever been bored reading a Brooks story. We get a generic coming of age story as Panterra Qu accepts the Knight of the Word mantle. We get a generic coming of age story as Prue Liss is called upon to make a personal sacrifice for the greater good. We get a generic coming of age story as Phryne Amarantyne accepts responsibility for the Elfstones. We get a generic coming of age story as Xac Wen strives to prove himself to his peers and his heroes. After playing with some heavy and controversial themes in the previous book, to see this book populated by such generic character arcs is a massive let down. The one redeeming feature of this book is it's villain, the Ragpicker. He is a cold, calculating and vile demon who hunts down Knights of the Word just for fun. His scenes are by far the most interesting in the book – he exudes an air made up of equal parts malevolence, power, and competence, and it is fascinating to watch how easily he can manipulate entire villages just by playing on their hopes and fears. In just one book Brooks established the Ragpicker as one of the most capable villains in the Shannara universe and it would have been nice to see how he would have developed over the course of an entire series rather than just the one book.

The writing here is pretty good, a style that has become well refined after twenty five years of Shannara. The world building is as strong as ever and the action scenes continue to be both vivid and exciting. The pacing is good, the story is easy to read, but it feels like there is far too much unnecessary prose here. This is a book

that is twice as long as needed to be, which is a shame because there were so many sub-plots from the first book that were left untouched, and many more from this book that were left unresolved.

The Measure of Magic an uncharacteristically mediocre attempt at a novel by Terry Brooks. While there are some great scenes with some epic action sequences, they are interspersed by boring character development and relationships that refuse to evolve. It's not a bad read by any stretch of the imagination, and I have read much worse, but I expected more from Brooks on this outing. If you are looking for resolution of the various plot threads established over the past five years, you will end up feeling disappointed. However, if you can go into this story without expecting the overall genesis of Shannara to be resolved then I think you can glean quite a bit of enjoyment out of this book.

Lighthearted says

With the death of Sider Ament, Panterra Qu becomes the new Bearer of the Black Staff. Pan doesn't know what power the Staff holds or how to call upon its magic but he has to trust that he will know what to do when the time comes. He has to because he must rescue Prue from the Trolls, he must protect the valley from invasion, and he must help Phryne

While Pan searches for her, Prue Liss searches for him. She strikes a deal which will enhance her innate ability to sense danger but the cost is steep. Meanwhile Phryne Amarantyne searches for the legendary Elfstones, a cunning demon leads the villagers of Glensk Wood astray, and invading armies march towards both Aphalion Pass and Declan Reach.

Solid Shannara, if a bit slower-paced and maybe a tad simpler. There's less development of the Shannara world; there's more emphasis on character introspection and this tends to slow things down a bit. For the most part this was okay, but I felt it took the adrenaline away from some of the action scenes, particularly the scene with Pan and the demon. I also felt that the escape scenes in this volume were a bit easier than in previous Shannara titles but I may be misremembering.

I loved the Sider Ament/Aislinne Kray/Pogue storyline and I loved the relationship between Pan & Prue. Arik Siq, Bonnaisant, Skeale Eile, and the Ragpicker are wonderfully creepy villains. I never warmed to Phryne's character so the relationship between Phryne and Pan didn't have nearly the impact on me that Sider and Aislinne's did but that's okay.

If there are future Legends of Shannara books (and I hope there are!), I hope that we're introduced to the beginning of the Druidic Order and the building of Paranor. And a Moor Cat companion!

Jennifer says

It took me a month to get through this book! I fell in love with Terry Brooks in his urban fantasy books (The Word & Void novels and Genesis of Shannara), but the books that followed return to his more classic fantasy roots. In "The Measure of the Magic" there was entirely too much inner dialogue by characters either reiterating events that just happened or pining of their feelings. I'm amazed anyone in the book survived to the end as much time as they spent examining their feelings instead of fighting foes. The relationships presenting in this novel fell flat for me, and the only interesting relationship that seemed to bud was given two sentences. That said, there were a few cool moments in the book that were totally awesome and kept the pages turning. Unfortunately they were after the 300-page mark. I persevered to the end just to add this

stupid book to my Reading Challenge for the year. Not sure if I'll read the next book of the series until a friend has read it and deemed it interesting.

J. says

Shannara is franchise fiction from Terry Brooks. Shannara readers go to that world for a familiar set of powers, beings, elements, etc. You are not reading this for literary value, you are reading it for fun.

This book was not fun. 75% of what I read before I gave up, was internal monologue by characters stating obvious things. There is a really bad use of the deus ex machina with the King of the Silver River that is 100% a corner being written out of (same reason I stopped reading Hunger Games book 1 btw).

The characters, act stupidly, and are thus hard to empathize with.

I thought Brooks made a mistake trying to merge his worlds of the "Demon" series and "Shannara" together as both would be diminished. Hopefully he is done writing through this mix of faerie and judeo-christianesque "knight of the word" hybrid crapulence.

Jeff H says

An excellent two book story. A lot of action, twists and turns. The ending left room for a hopefully sequel book. Picking up the characters where this book ended.

Sadly I appear to have reached the end of the Shannara series. I've read over 30 of the books and have not found anything new I haven't read yet. It was a fun journey.

Time to search for a new series of science fiction/fantasy. A new world to explore.

Amanda says

Well, things make a little more sense now, since discovering this is the 2nd of 3 books. I was under the impression this was a two-book set-up, so as I'm running out of pages and wondering how this is going to get all neatly resolved in a short amount of time, I did a little recon and found out there's still one more book to go. Which is good.

I flew through this pretty quickly, as I'd wanted to do over the long weekend. One of the things Terry does well that I really appreciate is write strong female characters. None of this running through a dark forest in 4 inch heels running from The Bad hoping to be rescued. His female characters Kick Keister. They are strong and vulnerable, never weak. It's nice to follow heroines that take charge, but not at the cost of what makes them who they are. No doormats here!

It's a good middle book story, tho I did think it got a little angsty at a few points. Then again, considering the main characters are in their mid to late teens, I guess that is acceptable, as angst is a chunky part of that age.

Or at least, it was when I was there!

Looking forward to the resolve of the final installment.

Terry remains my fave fantasy author for consistently top notch writing - strong characters, solid story development and good flow that keeps the pages flying.

Albert Riehle says

An uncharacteristically weak ending to this set of books. That may say more about where Brooks has set his own bar than this book though. The Measure of the Magic had some great characters and scenes that will have fans clapping, but overall it failed to measure up.

The hasty, fortuitous conclusion was the worst part. A great villain got a weak death, the protagonists seemed more lucky than anything else and their journeys taught them nothing that helped them in the end.

I'm pretty disappointed and feel like this set of books accomplished very little in the overall storyline. Some great characters, ideas and scenes are there to be enjoyed along the way but for me it just wasn't enough. Especially since I've invested two years and two books to this particular storyline.

Maybe these "cliffhanger series" that he's been writing are easier? Maybe they guarantee more sales? I don't know. But when you flop after bringing the reader on that long ride the disappointment is certainly intensified. It was so here and I still contend that Brooks does his best work in the stand alone book form. Apparently that's not what's most important though.

This book left me feeling empty. I think I'll reread Elfstones and Wishsong to help remember what magic feels like and to remember why Brooks is and always will be one of my favorite writers.

When he's on there is no one better.

Cheryl Landmark says

Review to come soon.

Squire says

#8/29 in my Epic Shannara Quest.

The final volume in Brooks *Legends of Shannara* series is a meatier story than the previous book. While not as complex as the previous two pre-Shannara series (*Word and the Void* and *Genesis of Shannara*), it takes the fantasy tropes Brooks has lapsed into (his ripoffs of his own works were out of the picture for the most part) and tweaks them just enough while adding layers to established characterizations. All of this added up to a four-star experience for me.

Until I hit Chapter Twenty Nine.

The unexpected nature of the action and exuberance of Brooks' writing in this chapter won me over completely and turned a good reading experience into a great one. And with these sort of books, it's all about the experience and this one (I got to chapter 29 during halftime of the Superbowl--Coldplay, Bruno Mars, Beyoncé? Wake me up when they reunite Molly Hatchet for a halftime show) was a real winner in the end.

Rose says

I usually don't bother writing reviews for books. Normally I check reviews on books before I read them before I decide if I want to invest any time into them. That is, unless it's an author I have been reading for a long time. I've read pretty much every book Terry Brooks has written (and own most of them). This is the first time I've been disappointed, and was compelled to write about it.

For some reason this book felt like a YA novel to me (I have nothing against YA novels, I read them from time to time, but this just isn't what I was expecting). It's been at least a year since I read *Bearers of the Black Staff*, but I recall it being a lot more interesting. I've also read a lot of dark fantasy since *Bearers*, so maybe that's why the book felt like it was directed at younger readers.

(view spoiler)

It almost seemed like he rushed to finish it, as though he was bored writing about these characters and just wanted to move onto his next book. It felt like this book and *Bearers* could have been one book because the ending was just...blah. All of the 'final confrontations' were incredibly boring, and lasted maybe a paragraph. It actually would have been better if it had spanned to a third book instead of the ending we got. According to Brooks' website this is the final book in a duology, so I'm not sure where people are getting this third book thing from.

Maybe I was a little hard on this book...because I really do like Terry Brooks. I guess my expectations were just high after reading his books for the last twelve years, or maybe I am just outgrowing them. I still have every intention of buying his new books in the future just because I've been reading them for so long.

Markus says

The Measure of the Magic begins exactly where *Bearers of the Black Staff* ended, which is basically where everything fell to pieces. The last descendant of the Knights of the Word lies dead, fallen to the poison of a treacherous troll. Phryne Amarantyne has been imprisoned in Arborlon, framed for the murder of her own father. And the Drouj army stands on the doorstep of the valley, threatening to invade and conquer it all.

As it that was not enough, the first few chapters of the second book add a whole new set of factors to the excitement. The dragon returns, hunting for magic. Prue Liss suddenly disappears in a flash of light. And most important of all, an mysterious old man collecting rags appears outside the valley, seeking to enter.

All in all, this was another good Brooks novel. At some points it might feel a bit boring, but mostly it's a real page-turner. I think the Legends duology really stands out in the Shannara universe, as none of the earlier additions have been so fast-paced nor so filled with intrigue and deception as these two. That does not necessarily add to the quality, and I still haven't read anything from Brooks that surpasses the original Shannara trilogy, but it does contribute to making this book all the more interesting and exciting.

Also, it has a beautiful Elven princess and her magical stones riding the last of the dragons into battle. That alone made it worth reading.

Sam Jones says

Loved this book. The series just seems to get better and better. Legends of Shannara consists of two books which is a bit sad because I loved the characters and I doubt we'll hear anymore from them in future series. This last book was action packed and held a few surprises. If you only want a taste of Terry Brooks Shannara series then pick this one.

Sakura87 says

Il secondo volume della minisaga *Le leggende di Shannara, Il potere della magia*, prende le mosse esattamente da dove L'ultimo cavaliere si era interrotto: Panterra è chino sul cadavere di Sider Ament, chiedendosi se può e deve accettare l'eredità magica che lui gli ha offerto, il bastone nero. Un demone molto potente, celato nei panni di un vecchio Stracciaiolo, è intanto sulle sue tracce intenzionato a nutrirsi della sua magia. Prue è assediata dai troll da cui è riuscita a sfuggire grazie all'aiuto suicida di Deladion Inch. I fratelli Orullian presidiano uno dei valichi di accesso alla Valle, attendendo l'attacco dei troll. Phryne è accusata dell'omicidio del padre, in realtà ordito dalla matrigna Isoeld per salire al trono a suo discapito e perpetrato da Bonnasaint, sicario al servizio di Skeal Eile. Quest'ultimo trama ancora per diventare leader politico (oltre che spirituale) dei Figli del Falco, che ancora attendono il prescelto che li condurrà fuori dalla Valle verso una terra promessa.

Mi spiace dirlo, ma questo libro risulta persino peggiore del precedente. Se anche la trama desta un qualche interesse e riesce a non essere scontata, ci sono trovate che definire imbarazzanti è poco: il libro pullula di personaggi potenti e scaltri che si dimostrano oltremodo idioti. Abbiamo un potente demone che potrebbe eliminare un normale essere umano schioccando le dita e che invece si diverte ad addormentarne uno pizzicandogli i nervi del collo per poi trascinarlo sulla scena di un omicidio per far sì che venga accusato. Abbiamo l'ex protagonista, mago capace, che alla fine del precedente libro si è fatto uccidere da un semplice dardo di cerbottana avvelenato. Un altro personaggio, scaltro e forte, che si è lasciato esplodere per salvare una ragazzina mai vista. Un'intrigante regina che invece di eliminare la figliastra che ha fatto imputare di omicidio la fa chiudere per giorni in una stanza sorvegliata da una sola guardia (aspettandosi che nessuno possa essere dalla sua parte e possa liberarla). Abbiamo dei troll feroci e astuti di nome, e in grado di perdersi in un bicchier d'acqua di fatto. Abbiamo il re del Fiume Argento che si dimostra in grado di intervenire attivamente nella storia dalla parte dei protagonisti, ma che – non viene spiegato il motivo – non risolve tutta la situazione a loro vantaggio con un semplice battito di ciglia. Poi abbiamo un killer spietato, presentato come letalissimo, che fallisce due volte su due (facendosi peraltro catturare) e che spiffera tutto ciò che sa due righe dopo aver detto che non parlerà mai. A tal proposito, abbiamo anche una ragazza che commoventemente offre *qualsiasi cosa* per ottenere un potenziamento della sua magia al fine di aiutare il migliore amico, e che due pagine dopo si dispera oltre misura per aver perso la facoltà di vedere i colori chiedendosi inoltre con preoccupazione se la gente possa trovarla brutta per il modo in cui appaiono ora i suoi occhi.

Io, a questo punto, caricherei tutti i personaggi su un pullmino e li porterei con cappellini e palloncini a far visita allo zoo. Perché questo libro non è una parodia, né fa ridere come una parodia, ma i suoi personaggi si comportano da parodie, da fantocci vestiti da protagonisti fantasy che tentano di sembrare autorevoli e profondi. Si salva veramente poco: certamente non la relazione tra l'elfa Phryne e il protagonista Pan (che in realtà protagonista lo è ben poco), nel precedente romanzo prontamente definita 'amore' nonostante i due

personaggi si siano visti parlare una o due volte, e portata avanti in modo piatto e insensato solo perché ormai era iniziata. Descrizioni ridotte all'osso, psicologia zero: chi ama Brooks può ormai solo rileggersi i primi, classici cicli di Shannara, magari più aderenti allo schema del Signore degli Anelli ma senza dubbio ricchi di situazioni e personaggi di spicco.

Non parliamo poi dell'edizione, terribile come al solito: refusi su refusi ('gli' al posto di 'loro', 'gli' al posto di 'le' o viceversa, punti a fine frase mancanti, parole scomparse nel nulla), di cui tutti noi lettori più attenti continuiamo a lamentarci da anni senza che la Mondadori faccia qualcosa a riguardo, come assumere una manciata di correttori di bozze che si assicurino che ogni cosa sia al suo posto prima di mandare in stampa un testo. Dopotutto, non si tratta di un piccolo editore a gestione familiare in cui il padre si occupa della stampa, la madre della grafica, e la figlia della distribuzione, ma di una delle maggiori case editrici italiane, che peraltro i suoi testi se li fa pagare profumatamente dai lettori. Parole gettate al vento, come sempre.

Stefan says

It took me awhile to finish this book. I would read a few chapters, then pick something else up, and then the book would be due back at the library, a few months would go by and I would check it out again and repeat the process. I had a hard time staying engaged in the story, it is not that it was not good, it is just that the "hook" never felt like it really set.

I do wish this were a trilogy and not a duology. I feel like there is much more left for Panterra and Prue, and I would really like to here more of their story. In any event, this was a good series and a good back story for the Shannara series. I have only read "Te Sword of Shannara" but have always wanted to read the entire series. I will definitely be adding the other books to my reading list.
