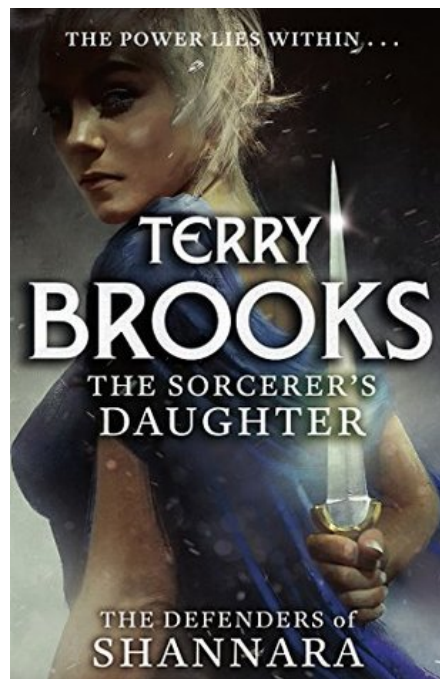




The Sorcerer's Daughter: The Defenders of Shannara

Terry Brooks

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The inspiration for the epic new *Shannara Chronicles* TV series, the world of Shannara is brimming with untold stories and unexplored territory. Now bestselling author Terry Brooks breaks new ground with a stand-alone adventure sure to thrill devoted readers and new fans alike.

Blood and magic will collide . . .

Leofur is the daughter of Arcannen - a power-hungry sorcerer prepared to use the blackest of magic to get what he wants.

But she is also devoted to Arcannen's nemesis, Paxon Leah - sworn protector of the Druids who defend the Four Lands against evil.

When the Druids are forced to flee, having been framed for a murderous rampage which leaves many dead, Paxon knows that the evil sorcerer Arcannen is behind it. As the Druids seek sanctuary, Leofur sets out on a perilous quest to thwart her father's desires to destroy them all . . .

The Sorcerer's Daughter: The Defenders of Shannara Details

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Author : Terry Brooks

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From Reader Review The Sorcerer's Daughter: The Defenders of Shannara for online ebook

Laura says

I didn't like anything about this other than the pretty cover. The main character made me angry at her basically every time her POV came back around.

I don't think I'll be reading any more of the newer Shannara books. If I ever feel the urge to revisit Shannara, I'll just re-read the older books.

Note: I read this as a free eARC from Netgalley

Jeff Sirovatka says

I feel like Brooks is losing his touch. This was the least enjoyable story I've read of his. Shannara simply isn't what it once was.

The plot was so very formulaic that I already had the story done by chapter 4 once I knew who all the characters were. The characters were very one-dimensional, there was simply far too much romance, and the villains are just unimaginative. Arcannan is a weak villain who is never really fleshed out to become interesting and I was sick of him by the second book in this series.

I liked that he finally introduced a couple of new dangers, the tree-creatures and the Sleath. Other than that I was pretty much thoroughly disappointed. I wish Brooks could rediscover the magic he once had that made me fall in love with the Four Lands.

Michelle Hauck says

These stories are just written with too distant a POV for me anymore. The characters spend all their time in their heads and so much of the action happens off-screen. The secondary characters are sketchy and when they parish--as they do often--there's really no emotion. I don't care about what happens and I skimmed to the end. The writing in Brook's stories have no heart anymore.

Althea Ann says

It had been many, many years since I'd read a Shannara book - long enough that I had no idea whether my distantly-remembered opinions of the early books were valid or not. When I had the opportunity to pick this up from NetGalley and DelRey, I was happy to check it out and see what I'd been missing all this time.

Unfortunately, I failed to be won over. Although this was explicitly advertised as a "stand-alone" novel, it's really not. A huge chunk of the beginning of the story is a "let's get all caught up" infodump... but somehow, though a large number of pages are devoted to the backstory and how all the characters are related to each other, I didn't come out of it feeling like I really 'knew' them at all, or that I was really certain of the scenario.

I'm guessing that if I'd read earlier books, I might've felt better acquainted - but in that case, I think I would've been more annoyed at having to get through all the past history.

Leofur and Chrysallin are two young women who have become good friends. When Chrysallin is kidnapped, Leofur must go on a quest to save her - not just because of their friendship, but because she suspects her father, the evil wizard Arcannen Rai, might be involved in the abduction. In addition, Leofur's partner, Paxon, is Chrysallin's brother. Although Paxon is off on his own mission, and doesn't seem to have time to spare for Leofur, whatever would he say if he came back to find his sister gone?

As a secondary plot, we follow Paxon's mission. A diplomatic summit between Druids and a Federation Council is attacked, and although innocent, the Druids fear that they'll be blamed. Paxon must lead the druids back to their safe stronghold, but their journey is plagued by mishaps. A suspicion grows that who else but the evil wizard Arcannen Rai is behind the terrorism.

While entertaining enough, the plot structure felt quite formulaic. I also didn't really like the 'steampunk' elements thrown into the general "quest fantasy" scenario - they didn't feel natural in the setting; it was more like they were thrown in just to suit a current trend.

Overall, my pre-teenage opinion that Brooks is rather mediocre and generic fantasy has been confirmed.

Bookdragon Sean says

Some people are manipulated so easily. The evil sorcerer Arcannon allows his enemies to see exactly what he wants, and they, being the generic characters that they are, fall for every last trick. Sometimes it'd be nice to see a character with a degree of sense that doesn't blindly walk into every trap.

Granted, some of them are fairly clever but everyone just slots conveniently into place to awkwardly push the plot forward. If a renowned and celebrated order of peacekeepers visit your city and hold a delegation, which then turns into a massacre, you'd have to be pretty stupid to automatically assume that it was them. These guys are heroes; they are known to be good: it is clearly a set up. But, no, the logical solution is clearly to chase them down the streets with your weapons in the air. For all the evil that infests this world, you'd be slightly sceptical about the situation. Instead a forced and predictably clichéd chase scene occurs. (yawn)

It wasn't the best start to the book. Fortunately, things did begin to pick up. A new character called Imror stole much of the show; he is a shapeshifter and an extremely complex individual, worthy of his own story. When he recounted his past I was enthralled. He developed into the most interesting and well written character of the entire trilogy. He was troubled, broody and governed by his instincts. At heart he's morally good, but his drives took over and made him something else. He saved the story. Brooks does have the ability to recognise when his current characters are beginning to lag, and can always add new ones to make things good again. That being said though, those original characters never needed to become dull had they been written well.

Is there anything good about this?

I did have a few other problems with the storytelling. The troll guards were practically furniture and seem to have adopted a Stormtrooper like quality: they always die. The nemesis of the series ultimately fell flat of all expectations. The real reasons that drove him remained shrouded, so I can only assume that he was the typical bad-guy type. A rather standard love triangle developed, but it did end in the best of ways. It was one of the best endings I've seen of this standard sub-plot. Some of the story began to feel a little forced, and

seemed as if they were written simply for the viewers of the recent television show.

However, for all of my criticism- of which there are many- I did enjoy this series. This was far from the best book in it but it did have its moments, few that they were. The overall resolution I was happy with, thankfully, otherwise this would be an even more critical review. Paxon's conflict is finally over, and we must remember that this is his story more than any others. But, as ever, Brooks has left his world open for more adventures, more I'd gladly read.

Postscript- I need to read more of Brooks' earlier work where he was at his peak, the novels then felt like epic fantasy rather than an awkward attempt at the young adult genre.

The Defenders of Shannara

1. The High Druid's Blade- A sharp three stars
2. The Darkling Child- A solid 3.5 stars
3. The Sorcerer's Daughter- **A predictable 2.5 stars**

Squire says

#29/#29 in my Epic Shannara Quest.

This one might be my least favorite Shannara book. It begins all right, picking up a few months after the events of *The Darkling Child*. Paxon has returned to Parnaor with Leofur Rai as his lifemate and has revealed to his sister that she has the power of the wishsong. All is going fairly well until Brooks identifies the weapons master Onst Mondara (who trained Paxon) as a Dwarf. He was a Gnome in book 1 of *Defenders* and a Dwarf in book 3! On top of that, Brooks forgets the geography he created when the shape-shifter Imric Cort changes into a Parsk wolf, a creature from "the deep Eastland...the Parsk Valley, deep in the Rock Spur north of the High Bens." But the Rock Spur mountain range is in the Westland. The Ravenshorn Mountains are north of the High Bens. Probably not much of a problem for the casual reader, but it annoyed the hell out of me and colored my enjoyment of the book.

The centerpiece of the novel was the romance that grows between Leofur Rai, the titular daughter, and the shape-shifter Imric Cot--a story that I found unaffecting and ultimately quite maddening (view spoiler). Add to unappealing characters and stock action scenes, this one was only ok as a time-waster and this latest Shannara trilogy my least favorite.

Brooks has let it be known that *Defenders* is his pre-conclusion trilogy to the Shannara saga. He plans on wrapping the whole thing up in the next five years (to the consternation of his long-time fans and publisher). He said he's tired of Shannara, but doesn't want to die and leave it for another author to finish. Besides, he has other things he wants to do. I'll be anxiously awaiting the concluding series.

Shawn Speakman says

Put simply, **The Sorcerer's Daughter** is Terry Brooks' best book in several years. The previous two books -- which are largely stand alone tales featuring Paxon Leah's attempts to thwart the deeds of the evil Arcannen Rai -- pale in comparison to the third book. It is a stand alone as well though and can be read separate. As

such, I highly recommend it.

What makes this book so good? It's the relationships between its characters, particularly the one between Paxon, Leofur, and a new shape-shifting character named Imric Cort. This last one is one of the more fascinating characters in Terry's extensive encyclopedia of characters. I'll just say every chapter featuring him was enthralling and is worth the price of admission by itself.

The other relationship gets a bit less time on page but it's still important. For many years, readers have requested Terry also write an LGBT couple. And while he wrote his first one in **Armageddon's Children** and hid it in an interesting way, he spent more time here in **The Sorcerer's Daughter**. As a reader who believes in rights for all, I literally put the book down and applauded when the couple enters the story. It was a touching part of the tale -- and one I wished could have been explored more fully.

At any rate, this book is fantastic for how personal it is. Terry really delves into the characters here in intimate ways. And yet it is still filled with magic, a terrible witch, and a conclusion between Paxon and Arcannen that I did not see coming.

Again, one of Terry's best. Definitely read.

Adam Sprague says

After a good first book and a wonderful second book, this felt more like a 2.5 style of novella stretched into a novel. Dialogue-heavy prose with little character development and almost no action. It feels like the publishers wanted the classic 3 book trilogy, so Brooks just wrote the most boring romance novel in history. Such an unsatisfying end to this trilogy.

Danielle Shtab says

This was probably one of the worst fantasy novels I've ever read (listened to technically). The main protagonist is barely present and when she is, she is an utter bore and absolutely awful to have to listen to. She simply isn't an enjoyable character. I found Paxon Lee's story more interesting but it also grew boring a few chapters in, and increasingly convoluted. When an author uses adverbs profusely, incessantly, constantly, etc. it really lowers my opinion of the writer as well. Every conversation questions are repeated, you will find yourself hearing the same questions asked of the same characters over and over again.

There seemed to be something there in the beginning (maybe other stories in the series are better) and there was an attempt at world-building, but otherwise this book was just plain awful.

A generic ending with (spoilers) a woman choosing to be with someone who NEEDS her more than someone who didn't and both of those relationships having absolutely no chemistry.

I rarely review books but I had to make it clear how awful an experience I've had with this one.

Suzanne says

Although this is advertised as a "standalone," I think I would have gotten more out of this book if I had read the previous books in the series. I believe Paxon Leah is a continuing character, and the first part of this book especially refers to events that happened in earlier installments.

There is a lot of depth in Terry Brooks' world, and I liked the different weapons, and the airships - I was not expecting to see those elements, and they were a good change from "everything is magic." My favorite part of the book was the shapeshifter - I loved the power he had, and also the drawbacks that attended that power.

vaderbird says

My thoughts on the book are as simple as "While you're at it, why don't you give me a nice paper cut and pour lemon juice on it?" - Miracle Max

Why do I read or even bother anymore, I do not know?
Where is the originality, the characters with depth?

For a long time now it is just pumping out similar books that make me ask this question.
I hope the legacy that is remembered is the original trilogy, and not the books of the past number of years.

Save yourself your memories of Shannara.

Bookwraiths says

Originally reviewed at Bookwraiths.

My rating is 2.5 stars.

The Sorcerer's Daughter is the latest installment in The Defenders of Shannara series by Terry Brooks. Each novel a self-contained story with the same group of characters (chronicling their life struggle over years, not days or weeks), able to be fully enjoyed without any prior knowledge of the other thirty-two Shannara stories. It even has a stronger young adult lean to it than past books with a more modern tone, relationship diversity, and angst front and center. All of which means *Defenders* is tailored made to be accessible to new fans drawn to it by MTV's The Shannara Chronicles .

As the title declares, *The Sorcerer's Daughter's* main character is Leofur, who just happens to be the daughter of the rogue sorcerer Arcannen Rai; this mysterious villain having been the center of attention for two books. Lefour herself first introduced in The High Druid's Blade, where she played an important role in the story of Paxon Leah. She quickly disappeared thereafter, only mentioned in passing in The Darkling Child. Now, though, she is back, having reentered Paxon's life as his life partner between books. The two of them residing in the Druid's Keep to allow Paxon to continue his duties as the High Druid's Blade. Leofur's time spent attempting to heal Chrysallin, Paxon's emotionally scarred sister, from the damage done by Arcannen as well as help train her in the use of the wishsong.

The seemingly peaceful contentment of Leofur's new life is an illusion however. Paxon's long absences and her feelings of being unneeded slowly building a wall between the couple. Only the strong bond between Leofur and Chrysallin holding things together. And when someone kidnaps Chrys, Leofur immediately leaps into action, assuming her father is up to no good yet again. Her drive to save her friend causing her to seek

out aid from other residents of the Druid's Keep, then set out to track down Paxon's sister herself, because (as usual) he is off on an important mission with the Druids. But even the sorcerer's daughter is not prepared for the dangers (both physical and emotional) she is about to encounter.

Oblivious to both Leofur's unhappiness and his sister's disappearance, Paxon Leah is in the human Southlands, leading the security force protecting the Druid's delegation to a grand summit of peace. His hopes that the growing rift between the two lands can be bridged, but his every instinct telling him that something horrible is going to occur. As in someone dies. Or lots of someones die. Or even worse. And when his foreboding begins to come true, Paxon is no more prepared for what is about to happen than Leofur.

On the surface, *The Sorcerer's Daughter* seems to have every essential requirement for a compelling young adult fantasy. Strong female lead. Sensitive yet oblivious male lead. Young adult couple in love but with problems. A tragic event followed by a daring mission. Unexpected treachery. Action and adventure. A brewing love triangle. Philosophical commentary about life. Diverse relationships. A steampunk-esque world. Flying crafts. Magically powered guns. Arcane beings. Twists and turn. And a surprise ending. But even with all those things going for it, this book was merely an "okay" read, missing the mark for one important reason: characters.

For me, interesting characters is the key feature of every good, or great, novel. You have to have them or even the most amazing plot will die a quick death. Without someone to empathize with or like, there isn't any burning need to see what happens in a story. And, unfortunately, *The Sorcerer's Daughter* really struggles in this most important area. None of the characters here really leaping off the pages at you. All of them fairly one dimensional, cookie cutter individuals, who react exactly as you expect without any variation. The lack of investment in their fates causing all the adventure to be fairly pedestrian affairs; none of it capturing your attention or causing you to want to keep flipping the pages to see what happens to them. And the worst of the lot were our two main characters: Paxon Leah and Leofur.

Paxon Leah was especially disappointing for me, because he had shown a lot of personal growth between the first two books. The dissatisfied country boy from book one transformed into a dedicated, young man in book two, one who is committed to a cause, self-assured in a non-arrogant way, and willing to brave dangers to help advance that cause. In this novel though, Paxon has turned back into a very one dimensional good guy, who never gets upset, never shows any real emotions, never seems out of his element no matter the crisis thrown at him, and never has a clue what is going on inside his life partner's head. This portrayal of him not ringing true at all to me, especially because all the emotional trauma which supposedly caused this regression is not shown in this narrative. Rather, it is related to the reader through Lefour's very self-centered recollection of it, which brings me to our main character.

How can one describe Leofur in this novel? Unlikeable. Self-centered. Needy. Annoying. Overpowered. I could call her other names, but the simple fact is reading about her was as cringe worthy as listening to someone scratch their nails across a chalkboard. Her every word, action and thought amazingly irritating. As the tale went along, I really questioned how I had liked this person when she appeared in *The High Druid's Blade*. There she was confident, interesting, and helpful. But now she was none of those things, though she constantly tells herself otherwise in her internal monologue. Eventually, I ceased to care, praying the focus would shift back to the one-dimensional Paxon, where, at least, the action was fairly non-stop.

The Sorcerer's Daughter is another step in the evolution of the *Shannara* series; the transformation of this classic fantasy into a more modern, steampunk-esque story gaining speed with every novel. Leofur's time in the spotlight is a very logical progression of *The Defenders of Shannara*, as it attempts to entice fans of MTV's *The Shannara Chronicles* into becoming frequent readers, and while it delivers in many ways (plot, world building, action), the characters were the main stumbling block for me, especially our resident sorcerer's daughter who turned from a rising star into a falling meteor.

I received this book from the publisher in exchange for a fair and honest review. I'd like to thank them for allowing me to receive this review copy and inform everyone that the review you have read is my opinion alone.

John says

Well, 2 stars feels really harsh, but 'it's ok' is about all I can muster. The first 2/3 of the book was way too much exposition, and telling the reader about conversations and what happened instead of giving the conversations and scenes where things happened. The feel was an extended and detailed outline that was never fleshed out.

As a really long time fan, it worries me a touch about the next trilogy. Not the least of which because he has said on numerous occasions this was his last book specifically because he didn't want to burn out on Shannara or start retelling the same stories. Now, it is this:

"Currently, Terry is writing the first book in the chronological-ending Shannara trilogy, which will begin publishing 2017. It does not have a title yet.

When finished with the trilogy, Terry will continue writing Shannara novels set in pre-history."

I'll try the next one, but if it's anything like this, it may time to part ways. I hope not.

Gareth Otton says

Well, it finally happened. Terry Brook's once great Shannara series has hit such a high level of 'Meh' that I could only make it two-thirds of the way through before giving up.

Though entitled The Sorcerer's daughter, the story is actually split almost equally between Paxon Leah and Lefour. After sabotage at peace talks between druids and the federtion, Paxon struggles to lead the druids back to Paranor safely. When Paxon's sister is kidnapped outside of Paranor, Lefour must find a way to track her down and save her.

Neither of these story lines held any interest for me because both were lacking in likeable characters for me to root for. The last two books have failed to build these characters to the point where I care about them and this book didn't make me want to find out about their story either. Therefore there are no stakes to carry you through the story.

It doesn't help that the writing style lacks any kind of forward momentum either. Each chapter starts with a 1-3 page recap of what has happened in the story so far, along with information on where each character stands in that story in the form of naval gazing from the POV character. By the time anything new happens to carry the story forward, the chapter is almost over. This means we spend a lot of time learning what we have already read over and over, and barely any time being drip-fed new information to move the story on. It was during one such recap where Lefour is questioning her relationship with Paxon for what felt like the zillionth time that I finally gave in on this book.

Where has the magic and wonder gone from this series? I remember when it used to be a series about magic and adventure. There were real characters with strong stakes that meant you couldn't put the book down. My

favourite thing was that the events of each book/series were world changing and made the world of Shannara evolve into something bigger and better.

Mr Brooks and the Shannara series has played a big role in shaping the reader I am today. However, my once favourite author hasn't managed to put out a book that has truly held my interest since The Gypsy Morph back in 2008. 8 Shannara novels, a scattering of short stories and an abysmal Landover novel later, and I have finally taken the hint... this isn't a slump I have to wait out, it's an author who either no longer cares or has completely lost his mojo with no signs of getting it back.

I think that this is where me and Mr. Brooks part ways. I have been a loyal fan for 15 years. However, whether it's selling out this series to be made into some cheap knock-off TV show that showed no respect to the source material, or maybe writing a single 300-350 page book per year that is at best a copy of better works and at worst almost unreadable rubbish; I just can't take it anymore.

For people who have never read Mr Brooks' work before, please go back and start with his early works. This trilogy has been marketed as a series of stand-alone novels, but don't let that fool you into thinking you can just pick it up here and be happy with the series. Go back to when it was good and don't let this book rob you from the experience of early Shannara.

Alyson says

The prose was plain and the character voices really didn't stand out from one another. I found it hard to pay attention and care after a while. Despite the somewhat clunky exposition, I didn't feel like I knew the world well enough to understand all of what was going on. The blurb claims this book should stand alone, but it in no way reads that way. It reads as part of a series and is part of a series so why even pretend that it can stand alone?
