

The Sword of Shannara Study Guide

The Sword of Shannara by Terry Brooks

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Plot Summary

The *Sword of Shannara* by Terry Brooks is a fantasy novel that follows a group of people brought together to retrieve the magical Sword of Shannara, which is the only weapon that can defeat Brona, the evil Warlock Lord. The only person who can wield the Sword is Shea, who does not even believe the tales about Brona. When his family is threatened, Shea reluctantly joins the quest to find the Sword and destroy Brona.

The location is a world where science destroyed the landscape in a horrific holocaust and mutated the remaining people and creatures. Now, there are multiple races, named after mythical creatures of the past such as Elves, Dwarfs, Trolls, and Gnomes. The land is ruled by magic instead of science and only a few people called Druids still have a limited knowledge of science.

There are four main lands: the Westland where the Elves live; the forests of Eastland where the Dwarfs live; the Southland where humans isolate themselves into small communities; and the Northland where the Trolls, Gnomes, and creatures called Skull Bearers live and serve the antagonist Brona.

The protagonist Shea is a half-elven, half-human who lives in the Shady Vale in the Southlands with his adopted human brother Flick. Their lives change when a mysterious stranger visits and tells Shea he is the last descendant of the famous Elven King, Jerle Shannara and the only person who can use the Sword of Shannara.

The stranger is called Allanon and is the last remaining Druid besides Brona and a great power in his own right. Allanon unexpectedly leaves when he learns his and the Sword's home called Paranor is captured by Brona. Shea and Flick flee the Vale when the Skull Bearers threaten their family. They go to the home of Shea's friend, Menion Leah who is the Prince of the highland city of Leah. Menion Leah is thrilled to go on a new adventure as he is not ready to take on the responsibilities of learning to rule. Meanwhile, Allanon puts together a group of people from the different races to reclaim the sword and fight Brona. The group consists of two elven brothers, Durin and Dayel, a dwarf named Hendel, Balinor, Prince of Callahorn and leader of the Border Legion and of course, Shea, Flick, Menion Leah and Allanon.

Along the way the group grows very close and works together to save the four lands. Even when the group separates, they worry about all members of the group. Flick and Allanon search for the missing Shea and end up rescuing the Elf King Eventine. Durin, Dayel, Balinor, Hendel, and Menion fight the armies of Brona with the help of the Border Legion in Balinor's home of Tyrsis. Shea is captured by Gnomes and rescued by a thief named Panamon Creel and a Rock Troll named Keltset who ultimately help Shea sneak into the Warlock Lord's home, the Skull Kingdom. There Shea draws the Sword of Shannara and defeats Brona.



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

The *Sword of Shannara* by Terry Brooks seems to be set on Earth but after the fall of science due to a catastrophic war. Now magic reigns and only a select few have limited knowledge of the old science. The landscape and physical attributes of the planet have changed and now many races have appeared such as Elves, Gnomes, Dwarves, Trolls and Humans. The story follows two brothers who become reluctant heroes to save their family, friends, and world from subjugation. Lasting bonds form among friends, acquaintances, thieves, races, and traveling companions. This is the first novel written in the Shannara series and teaches the importance of valuing the contribution each person makes to society.

Flick Ohmsford, a young, stocky man, enters the forest on his way home to his father's Inn in the Shady Vale. He likes to travel and hear the gossip from surrounding areas, so has been selling goods to the country people North of Vale. As he walks into the dark forest, the silence reminds him of the rumors about a black-winged creature seen in the night sky. Flick's nervous reflection is interrupted by the approach of a very tall, dark stranger wearing a cowl. Flick draws a knife but is overpowered by the stranger who, though appearing threatening, assures Flick that he only wishes directions.

The stranger tells Flick he has a brother that the Valeman did not mention so he is suspicious that the stranger has knowledge of the Vale. The two continue the journey to Shady Vale while Flick reveals information about himself, his home, and his family and the stranger reveals nothing. The stranger suddenly pauses, listens, and in a hushed tone orders Flick to hide. Moments later, a dark shadow flies overhead and Flick envisions a creature of darkness with claws and a large wingspan. The shadow vanishes in the night sky but not before Flick is paralyzed with fear. The stranger comforts Flick but refuses to discuss the incident and the two continue their journey in a rushed manner.

Arriving at Curzad Ohmstead's Inn, Flick is greeted by his father who bears a marked resemblance to Flick's own stout, sturdy self. Curzad greets the stranger as if a friend and continues to spill information about their family while the stranger remains silently studying. When Shea Ohmstead approaches the gathering, the stranger sees the Elven features of Flick's brother, notes his slim, light build, and displays a marked interest even appearing to read Shea's mind. Shea notices the dark, yet somehow familiar stranger, and feels trapped but approaches the table anyway. The stranger gives his name as Allanon. The Ohmsford's have all heard the stories of this historian, philosopher, and have even heard the rumors that he practices the mystic arts. Allanon reveals he has come to the Vale looking for Shea.



Chapter 1 Analysis

We are first introduced to one of the main characters, Flick Ohmstead, as he ponders the darkness of the night and ominous silence that surrounds him. Flick looks stocky, calm, and unintelligent and appears to almost blend into his surroundings, only his eyes reveal a hidden intelligence and the burning desire for adventure.

The talk of the cloudless night and the dead silence as well as the rumors of evil makes the reader expect something bad is about to happen. The appearance of a dark, mysterious figure leads one to believe that evil forces are lurking. It is a strange time of night to be traveling and a chance encounter does not seem possible so the readers suspect the stranger was actually looking for Flick. His immediate interest in Shea, despite having never met Flick gives the reader a foreshadowing of the stranger's knowledge of the Valeman and his family. Maybe this meeting was not unintentional because it is always easier to garner information about a person during shared travels.

During the walk, a dark shadow flies overhead and Flick knows evil is near. Since dark generally portrays ominous events, this dark shadow foreshadows the evil to come. Fear shoots through his body but he manages to remain silent, which shows his ability to be brave even when terrified. The stranger brushes it off as just a shadow but Flick knows that something important has happened and realizes that the rumors may be true. Flick looks at the dark stranger again and fears that the flying shadow may not be the only thing he has to fear.

Flick arrives home with the stranger and the sunny familiarity of the Inn and the jovial, accepting nature of his father, Curzad, relieves some of Flick's fears and lightens his mood. Curzad and the stranger begin talking while they wait for Shea to join them for dinner. Shea arrives and nervously approaches the stranger feeling as if he is not only being sized up but his mind is being read. Flick notices the intense stare of the stranger towards to his brother and once again feels fear of this man.

Shea walks up and introduces himself. He feels an immediate familiarity from the stranger, almost as if he has met him. The stranger implies knowing Shea or at least knowledge of him and introduces himself as Allanon, a man known far and wide as an historian, philosopher, and even a practitioner of the mystic arts. Allanon feels sorry for the family as their lives are about to change for the worse. He only tells Shea he is here to find him.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

Shea wakes early and ponders how Allanon knows him. The Ohmsfords adopted and accepted him as family at a very young age, even though Shea is only distantly related. Allanon joins Shea and asks if he has heard of the Skull Kingdom. Allanon begins to tell him the history of man for the last two thousand years. Since the great wars, most humans are isolated from the world and other races and are content in the Southlands. Allanon explains to Shea that isolation will no longer be possible because of current politics and power struggles.

After the first thousand years, man found other creatures had evolved, including the Northland mountain trolls, the hill and forest Gnomes, the Dwarfs who have moved from caverns to the surface and the Elves who live in the forests of the Westlands. The races began fighting for dominance so the Druid council led by Galaphile was formed to bring peace and order. Even the Druids had power struggles so a small group separated forming a new order under Brona. 150 years after the first group split, there was a revolt rumored to be led by the second group's leader, Brona, also known as Master. The Druids and their allies overpowered the revolt.

Flick comes outside and when Allanon tries to exclude him from the narrative, Flick says brothers stick together. The Historian continues with the story of the second war of the races five hundred years before, when the Elves and Dwarfs fought against the Gnomes and Rock Trolls. The Dwarf King, Raybur felt the real enemy was Brona, the Warlock Lord, which makes Brona 500 years old at the time of the war. During the war, the Druid Bremen told the Elven King, Jerle Shannara that the Trolls were headed their way. Bremen creates an invincible sword through using magic that he gives to Jerle Shannara to aid in fighting the Warlock Lord's armies. According to the legend, the sword ended the war and the legend of the sword was born. During the battle both Bremen and the Warlock Lord vanished. The sword was given to the Druid Council at Paranor where it still resides.

At the end of the story Shea says the story is a fairy tale, which infuriates Allanon, who calls Shea a child. Frustrated, Allanon explains that Shea is the last surviving half son of the house of Shannara and is essential in the battle against the Warlock Lord who is now the ruler of the Skull Kingdom. Allanon tells Shea he is not in immediate danger, but they must talk again tomorrow.

Chapter 2 Analysis

Shea wakes and reflects on his childhood. He remembers playing with Elves as a child until his mom was sick and she took him to meet his cousins the Ohmsteads. She died soon after, so he was adopted by Curzad and never learned much about his past or his



father who died when Shea was extremely young. Flick assures Shea that his half-breed status gives him an advantage and that Shea is his brother bonded in love if not in blood.

Allanon interrupts Shea's reflections to tell him about the history of the races. He explains that humans were once the most visionary of the races and have since become extremely isolated. Men were the dominant race, but the war 2000 years before (probably nuclear) changed the landscape and the biology of the inhabitants and man became extremely primitive. Most men fled into the south and only after 1000 years did they discover that there were other races such as Dwarfs, who were an evolution of man, whose physical attributes adapted to match the land they inhabited. Man named the races after a fictional race from their past. The question remains, are all the races derivatives of man and were the old races fictional, or were they just hidden from man until technology destroyed man's domination and allowed the old races to thrive and magic to reenter the world? Allanon implies that Elves have always been around and rarely seen, but their story is for another time. Maybe all races are an evolution of Elves, not man.

The Druids were created to keep peace among the races and to preserve technology and magic together. Druids hold great influence over the races, but they eventually fall prey to the same problems as the other races, the desire to dominate, which throughout history is a fallacy of man. As a race, humans do not seem to learn from history. Some Druids were brighter and more powerful than others and broke away from the group to subjugate the races. Brona was rumored to be leader of this rogue faction.

In the middle of the story, Allanon pauses as he senses the approach of another, which displays the extra sensory powers of the mystic. Flick enters the room and insists on listening to the remainder of the tale. Allanon protests Flick staying because the tale has repercussions that may impact the rest of his life. Flick says he stays with his brother no matter what the issue. The family loyalty is questioned again and the bond between the brothers remains strong.

Allanon tells them that after the first war ended, the race of men scattered. The remaining Druids' power diminished and the Elves became the most powerful but isolated race. The isolated and scattered races caused other races to attempt to rise into power and the second war began with the Trolls and Gnomes pitted against all other races. The Dwarf King Raybur thought that the Trolls and Gnomes were being led by Brona, the Warlock Lord who would be over 500 years old at the time. If the story is to be believed, Brona has found a way to stall or even avoid death. The most powerful druid left at the time, Bremen, gave the great Elven leader a Sword that was so powerful that the war might not have been won without the now named "Sword of Shannara."

The sword's power is not discussed but it must be more than a symbol for the races because the Druids protect it in Paranor, a Druid stronghold. The legend of the sword states that the son of Shannara would need to take up the Sword in the future to protect the races from the Warlock Lord. Shea protests realizing that the story implies that Allanon is here for a son of Shannara. Shea insists that Eventine, the current Elven king



must be a descendant of the great king not a half-breed such as himself. Allanon tells the Valeman that he (Shea) is a distant son from the Shannara line and that Allanon knew Shea's parents and Shea. The Warlock Lord has killed all other descendants of the line and while he knows another child exists, Brona is unsure who and where this person lives.

Both brothers are fearful of what is coming but still feel anger and disbelief of the wild tale. They are not ready to accept how the future will change if they believe the stories. Allanon harshly tells them they must accept because even though the danger is not immediate, their ability to believe does not prevent anyone from hunting them down. The Druid leaves the room with a promise to explain more to them both tomorrow.



Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

Later that night, the brother's decide to go to Allanon's room and find he left without warning. They head to bed and discover a note in their room and three magic Elfstones for Shea that should only be used in the worst situations. In the note, Allanon tells them to flee for Culhaven in the forests of Anar where Balinor will help them. Finally, his note says that the sign of the skull means they must leave Shady Vale. Over the next ten days there are heavy rainstorms causing more discussion of strange happenings in the North.

Three weeks later, a letter arrives from Menion Leah, son of the King of Leah and a friend of Shea. Flick does not like him because Menion got them lost in the Black Oaks. More discussion of Menion is interrupted by the arrival of Balinor who introduces himself as the son of Ruhl Buckhannah, the King of Callahorn. The Prince says they must leave the Vale now or die, but Shea refuses to leave that quickly. Balinor reluctantly agrees and will act as a decoy by traveling south. Shea goes back to their room and packs just in case he must flee. He sleeps, but Flick decides to stand watch. He notices a huge, black shape out the window and wakes Shea who notices a pendent in the shape of a skull.

Chapter 3 Analysis

Later that night after Allanon's stories, Shea's and Flick's father sends them on chores and errands relating to the Inn. When they return, they find Allanon gone, and Shea fears for their safety without the protection of the Druid. Flick is thrilled at the departure and wants to put the strange stories behind them. They continue to analyze the stories and Flick gives up trying to convince Shea to dismiss the tales and leaves his brother to his own confused thoughts. Shea's confusion foreshadows his attitude and feelings of inadequacy. He also thinks he is not worthy of what others perceive as his destiny.

Heading to bed, they discover a note from Allanon and a gift of magical Elfstones. The Elfstones come with a warning to only use when necessary, which begs the question of their use and purpose. They are told to watch for a sign of the skull and to flee to Anar and meet with Balinor. The brother's decide to ignore the note and just wait to see if Balinor arrives or if they see a sign of the skull. This indicates distrust in the rumors and stories. If they see these signs, they might be willing to believe portions of the tales.

Over the next few days a massive storm hits the Vale and the rumors of unknown horrors from the North start to spread through the Vale due to the speed, length, and damage from the storm. The intense storm foreshadows the violence of events to come even though the storm does end and life returns to a semblance of normalcy.



A week later, a letter arrives for Shea from his friend, the Prince of Leah. Flick is disgusted with Leah stating that royal blood means nothing if the man is not worthy of respect. His negativity and inability to forgive Leah for a past transgression is obvious. Flick seems to believe the measure of a man is in his actions. Shea is more forgiving and enjoys different personalities in his life. During their discussion of the letter, Balinor, Prince of Callahorn arrives at the Inn to warn the brothers of imminent danger and tells them that Allanon is completely trustworthy. They refuse to leave on the word of the man but his presence backs up some of Allanon's story.

Shea and Flick discuss leaving just in case the stories are true. They do not want to endanger their families, which displays a devotion to life even if they are unsure of the tales. Shea needs some time to think so they go to bed; however, Flick stands watch just in case Shea decides to leave without him. Flick feels the brothers must stick together and his devotion to his family is made clear. Midway through the night, Shea wakes to a fearful and ashen Flick who points out the window to a dark shape with a skull pendant. They know now that their quiet existence will change and probably not for the better.



Chapter 4 - 6

Chapter 4 - 6 Summary

In chapter 4, Shea and Flick decide to leave immediately and head Northeast to Anar. Shea keeps in shape and because of his light form is able to move quickly. Flick's stocky, heavier form must work to keep up and he starts to tire. Flick spots a flying creature and the brothers fear they have been seen. The monster changes directions and flies north so they speed up to enter the protective covering of the Duln forest. Flick objects when Shea tells him they are going to get Leah to guide them through the Black Oaks. After crossing the Rappahalladran River, they nap several hours and then continue walking from midnight until sunrise. They discuss Leah again because Flick does not want his help, but Shea says he is a good friend and great swordsman. They stop to sleep near daybreak and wake to an ominous feeling caused by a Skull Bearer flying overhead. The rising sun sends the creature north away from the brothers.

In chapter 5, the brothers reach Leah and walk towards Leah's home. Menion is pleasantly surprised to see the Valemen but of course makes a snide remark about Flick. Shea tells him they need his help, and as they eat they give him the details of their problem. Menion is skeptical about the tale and suspicious of Allanon but is intrigued about the sword and the possibility of an adventure so agrees to guide the Valemen. Shea shows him the Elfstones and once again Leah is skeptical of their powers but hopes they prove their worth. He has heard of Balinor and the prowess of the Callahorn soldiers and tells the brothers they would be better protected by Balinor than by the Dwarfs. Shea says that both Allanon and Balinor said to go to Anar so they will continue to respect the advice.

Leah then debates the best route and Flick argues against going through the Black Oaks. The arguments between them upset Shea who says they must learn to get along and Menion agrees, offering his hand to Flick in peace. The next morning, they grab their packs, Menion's bow and arrow, and the Sword of Leah. The first day goes quickly, but the next few days are depressing due to the rain and cold. On the fourth day their spirits plummet and by the fifth day, Menion admits he may be lost. They try to use the Elfstones and eventually a bright light shows them the direction of the Black Oak forest. Even though the forest is a dangerous place, it is a relief to be out of the Lowlands of Clete. Of course Flick snidely says "Here we go again" (p 93) as they get ready to enter the Black Oak forest.

Flick reflects further on Shea's friendship with Leah and the irony that Shea does not approve of monarchies yet claims a friendship with a Prince. Now that Shea is a long-lost prince, Flick fears it may form a stronger bond with Leah and shut out Flick. Ending the discussion and lunch, they continue to walk through the woods. A few hours from Leah they encounter another Skull Bearer but again the approach of dawn saves them.



In chapter 6, now that the men are in the Black Oaks and hear sounds of life, they feel more comfortable. Menion says he wants travel along the edge of the Mist Marsh despite stories of a dangerous Mist Wraith. Flick climbs a tree to see where the sun is and to determine the fastest route east through the Oaks. After getting their location, they continue towards the Mist March, but soon the deepening mist greatly limits their vision. The men decide to make a rope chain between them so that they are not separated in the dense mist. This rope saves Leah from sinking in the bog. Unfortunately, before leaving the mist they encounter a large, green, multiple-tentacled wraith monster. When normal fighting is not prevailing, they once again use the Elfstones to defeat the monster.

The mist dissipates enough for them to see a little better so they continue their journey. The further they walk, the more their fatigue and injuries dull their alertness and Shea realizes Menion has vanished. Shea and Flick call out for Leah but get no response.

Chapter 4 - 6 Analysis

In chapter 4, Shea's worry and self-doubt surface again when they see the dark shadow. He is now afraid that his disbelief about the danger will cause the destruction of his family. When the shadow is attacked by the dog and the creature kills effortlessly and without mercy, the brothers realize these creatures will be difficult to kill and are something to fear. The evil of the flying creature is foreshadowed from the beginning of the book.

They prepare to leave immediately and Shea plans to go the most direct but difficult path that also leads them to Menion Leah, who can guide them through some difficult areas. Shea does not tell Flick they are headed to Leah, which could be a problem. Shea assumes that the Skull Bearers will think they are headed to family and friends. As they head out, the differences in their body types is immediately apparent as Flick struggles and Shea moves quickly ahead. Flick worries he may not be able to keep up through their entire trip.

Towards the end of their journey to meet with Leah, a creature flies overhead. The brothers pause certain of their impending death. Luckily, the morning sun is rising and it appears the dawn light caused the creature to veer north, which the reader probably assumes is home. Flick asks Shea where they are heading and is angry when he learns they are going to see Menion Leah. He worries Leah will get them lost again or lead them into a trap. Shea generally depends on his brother for help, so Flick hopes asking Leah for aid will not prove to be a mistake. Flick also worries that Allanon told them not to trust anyone and fears the repercussions of Shea's decision.

In chapter 5, they arrive at Leah where the walls appear unfriendly even in their exhausted state. Both realize how much they appreciate the freedom of the Vale and the forests that surround their home. As they walk towards Menion's home, Shea realizes that he and Leah have very little in common. Despite their differences in



opinion, he respects Menion's ability to track, hunt, and his defined sense of "right and wrong." (p. 76) The question remains, will Menion Leah be a hindrance or an asset?

At Menion's house, they explain their predicament. Leah realizes they have come to him because he is one of the few who knows this part of the country and is capable of guiding them successfully through the Lowlands of Clete and the Black Oaks. Leah values Shea's friendship and would do almost anything for him even though it means danger to himself. Shea has done something right in his life to have the devotion of two talented men willing to risk their lives for him despite his insecurities in his own abilities.

During the story, Menion expresses doubts about Allanon and even compares him to the evil that they seek to avoid. Flick reacts to this with subtle, surprised agreement, and it seems that anytime Allanon is mentioned a foreshadowing of darkness and danger follow. Shea brings out the Elfstones and reminds everyone that they must only be used in emergencies, implying that if they work, there might be repercussions to using them. The brief agreement between Menion and Flick does not last long as they begin to bicker about how to proceed. Shea reminds them that they might not survive the trip if they do not learn to get along.

They head to bed and Shea is plagued by self-doubt about himself and the future of those he loves. He hopes that he is doing the right thing and not endangering everyone based on what might still prove to be a fairy tale. The next morning the weather is horrible and the doubts resurface thanks to the oppressive wet, cold day that gives each man a bad feeling about the trip ahead.

The poor weather continues throughout the trip, obscuring the way through the Lowlands of Crete, depressing their spirits, and causing Menion to admit they may be lost. Even though Flick does not like Menion Leah, Flick sees another side of Leah when Leah admits he is lost. Flick forms a grudging respect when he sees that Leah is worried about their safety and upset that he may have failed the brothers. Shea decides to use the stones to help them find their way through the lowlands. At first they do not respond but his focus and concentration pays off when they light the way to the Black Oak forest. From this, the reader infers that the mind controls the stones, so obviously Shea's will is stronger than he realizes. They are excited to reach the woods, but Flick implies that more trouble awaits and his pessimism is in full swing.

In chapter 6, leaving the lowlands and once again hearing life gives the men a sense of relief. Menion asks Shea about the power of the Elfstones about which Shea admits to knowing very little. Shea even wonders if he has any control over the stones, which implies that the stones may have a sense of when they need to work that may conflict with Shea's wishes.

They have experienced the danger of the forest before and Leah feels if they skirt the edge of the marsh, the path will be easier to follow. The plan was solid except for the fear of a rumored Mist Wraith. They reluctantly agree to follow the path despite the fact that other "fairy tales" have been shown to be true.

Flick 's ability to climb the tree displays a marked dexterity and skill for climbing that may prove extremely useful later. After finding the correct path, they continue forward to the edge of marsh and feel an even more oppressive sense of silence and death than they found in the lowlands. The silence implies a lack of life that could have been destroyed by a predator such as the fabled mist creature.

When attacked by the Marsh creature, the Elfstones once again saves their lives. The mist, exhaustion, chill, and doubts cause Shea to look internally at the current state of their journey, so Shea does not notice Leah is no longer ahead of him. He needs to learn to pay attention because his reflection about his usefulness is hurting him more than his perceived inabilities.



Chapter 7 - 9

Chapter 7 - 9 Summary

In chapter 7, Shea wakes feeling dazed and has little memory of getting out of the Marsh. Flick is equally surprised and distressed they have lost Leah but puts on an act of bravo assuring them both that Menion always turns up. Knowing further searching is too risky, the brothers decide to travel north to the Silver River.

Since it is almost dark, they stop and rest. The brothers finally sleep only to waken when they sense danger. Seeing a Skull Bearer flying over the river makes them realize there is no place to hide. A flashing light on the other bank draws the attention of the creature until it flies into the distance. An old man appears with a light and tells the brothers to sit and sleep and they will find their trip has been shortened when they wake. After pleasant dreams, Shea wakes to find Balinor leaning over him and sees Dwarfs in the background.

Meanwhile, Leah travels toward the Silver River where he sees signs of two travelers. Leah feels that if he follows the river he is bound to find the brothers. Menion hears singing and discovers a beautiful girl by a twisted tree. Happy to see her, he approaches, but his hunter's instincts make him hesitate. However, he is already too close and is grabbed around the ankles by the odd tree's roots. Menion uses his sword to sever the roots; however, the needles that the tree is spraying makes him numb. Fortunately, a dwarf rescues him telling him that only an idiot plays with a Siren. Before passing out, Leah manages to gasp that he needs to find Balinor. The dwarf picks him and his weapons up and takes him to Anar.

Chapter 8 takes place in Anar, the home of the dwarfs. Balinor is in Anar, and Flick notices the people of Culhaven value Balinor greatly. The Prince has told the brothers not to leave the village. Balinor is one of the leaders of the Border Legion which was formed 500 years before to protect Callahorn and the Southland people. The Prince assures Shea and Flick that the Dwarf warriors are looking for Menion. A dwarf named Hendel arrives with Leah, who will be fine after receiving treatment for the Siren's barbs.

Shea and even Flick are happy to see Leah. Allanon arrives with bad news. Paranor was taken by the Warlock Lord and the sword has been seized. He assures them that the sword is useless to everyone but Shea. Allanon purposes a trip to Paranor to rescue the Sword of Shannara. He plans to take two Elven cousins of Eventine as well as Balinor. Menion says he will go, which provokes Shea into saying he will go as well, and of course where Shea goes so goes Flick. Allanon is pleased that Shea is showing more courage.

During chapter 9, Shea finally resigns himself to accepting the quest as does Flick. Balinor enters and Shea asks for more details of Allanon's life. Balinor tells them what he knows, which is that he is descended from Druid Bremen. Allanon enters and



reiterates the same information about the sword and the wars but the new description brings to mind a holocaust. Now that Brona has great power from the spirit world, he is as dangerous as the old science. The Skull Bearers are Brona's druid followers, their new forms showing their great evil. Since Bremen gave the Sword of Shannara to the Elven king, it was thought that only his heirs could use it and this belief continues until now. Allanon says no more and says they leave in the morning.

Chapter 7 - 9 Analysis

In chapter 7, both brothers wake in a field and are distressed over losing Leah. Shea is extremely upset that Menion is gone, feeling as if he has failed his friend but knowing that they must continue. Their goal is more important than any one person. Flick puts on a cheery front for Shea but has a moment of genuine concern for the Prince because he did save their lives. Flick is starting to realize that people change and first impressions do not necessarily sum up a person's entire worth. They decide to travel north to the Silver River where Shea thinks he glimpses an old man. The help they need may be closer than either brother realizes.

Shea and Flick stop for the night and Shea turns philosophical and questions why they are running to hide in Anar and what Brona hopes to accomplish. Flick says Allanon will tell them why when they arrive in Anar. Flick is not sure he wants to know the truth or understand the motivations of Brona or Allanon.

Shea and Flick wake to a feeling of danger and they know nothing can save them from the Skull Bearer. A light appears in the distance and distracts the creature. Another mythical legend is real and just saved their lives. The old man flashes a light without flame in the brothers' eyes. The light appears to be a flashlight because it does not have a heat source. Some of the old science survived, and it appears that the King of the Silver River might be a Druid who has knowledge of science and magic. The old man uses magic to whisk them to their destination.

Leah is also thinking of his previous life and its lack of purpose. One wild adventure after another does not create a good ruler and soon, if Brona attacks, Menion must step up and learn to put others' needs above his own.

In chapter 8, Shea is unhappy about being confined to the village but the more practical Flick is resigned to the restrictions since he is finding it to be very dangerous to travel.

There have been so many years of peace that most people do not believe there is any danger of war as long as they mind their own business. The rising evil will soon prove them wrong. The Border Legion will once again prove their worth, so people are right to respect Balinor.

Leah has provoked Shea into volunteering to come on the quest and fears Shea will be annoyed with him. Shea realizes if he does not go, the journey does not have a point because he is the only one who can use the sword. He seems to be resigned to his role but still doubts how he can truly help anyone except as symbol. Shea does the most



self-reflection and it does not improve his faith in himself. The other characters have faith in their abilities and do not constantly self-examine. They adapt and improve on themselves in each chapter. Shea continues to be the one-note pony that is unsure but reluctantly along for the ride.

During chapter 9, Shea is resigned to the quest but still has questions. Flick says events are beyond their control and reaffirms his commitment to Shea's quest. Their commitment to their family is what seems to be keeping them going. They are not 100% sure that everything Allanon tells them is the whole truth.

Shea questions Balinor about his reasons for coming on the journey. The prince briefly mentions wanting to leave Callahorn due to problems with his brother. Balinor and his army are crucial to defending the Border and the Southland, yet he is away from his kingdom during a crucial point in what could be a deadly attack. This is the first hint that the issues with his family may create huge problems in defending the land against Brona's army.

Shea also asks about Allanon. Balinor says he is a descendant of Druid Bremen, which might make Allanon the most powerful druid left. Even Balinor, who feels the Druid thinks of him as a son, has little additional knowledge. Allanon reveals so little and his motivation is constantly in question. Balinor is sure Allanon is one of the good guys, but what is he hiding, a great shame, a great evil, or just a great power.



Chapter 10 - 12

Chapter 10 - 12 Summary

In chapter 10, the morning finds Shea, Flick, Leah and Balinor all dressed appropriately for the journey. Allanon has the two elves as well as Hendel with him. The reticent Hendel leads as he knows the Culhaven area the best. As the group travels, they feel something is watching them as they are about to enter the Wolfsktaag Mountains. Hendel says Gnome scouts have spotted them. The Gnomes set fire to the forest behind them to drive them into a trap in the Pass of Noose. Menion and Durin are sent ahead to assess the situation. They see no one, so everyone enters the pass since the fire is close. They find a rope and wood bridge has been cut across the drop at the end of the Pass of Noose. Flick suggests Menion shoot an arrow one hundred and fifty yards to the bridge piece hanging down on the other side of the chasm. Menion hits the piece on the first shot. Handel and Allanon hold the bridge while Dayel crosses with a rope. After securing the rope, the others cross safely.

In chapter 11, Allanon has the party stop for the night but tells them he plans to continue and look for signs of Brona and his minions. He will mark the correct way with white cloths and red for the wrong way. As he travels ahead, he senses an evil presence in a valley and he ties a red cloth on that path. The alternate route is rougher but safer. Unfortunately, the creature is intelligent and removes the cloths.

The rest of the party goes through the valley where they encounter a prewar city with a huge creature. It attacks Flick and of course, Shea draws his knife and rushes to help. The creature overpowers both brothers and the remaining five fight until the creature flees to save its life. Both Flick and Shea have been stung and are unconscious and possibly dying. The group knows Allanon is the only one who can save the brothers, so they construct stretchers to carry the Valemen. They journey on until Handel spots the entrance to the pass of Jade. They need to go through the pass but hear chanting and discover that hundreds of Gnomes are blocking the path.

In chapter 12, Dayel presents the bleak news that a horde of Gnomes are blocking the way through the Pass of Jade. Balinor suggests that Menion shoot the chieftain while Hendel takes the credit for the shot. This will distract the Gnomes because of their hatred for dwarfs and especially Hendel. They can then sneak across the pass during the ensuing chaos.

Menion realizes he is unable to kill in cold blood so instead insults the chieftain by shooting him in the behind. Hendel positions himself on another portion of the trail and he yells at the Gnomes to divert their focus to him. The other members of the group run quickly through the pass encountering a small contingency of Gnomes that they successfully defeat with only Dayel receiving a bad slash.



After a short march, Durin hears more footsteps and sees Allanon with a group of Gnomes. The Druid tells them that these Gnomes are healers, called Stores, who dedicate their lives to helping anyone, no matter their race. The Gnomes pick up the injured Shea and Flick and start the journey to their home in the Storlock. When the group arrives at the Storlock, Menion listens to the Stors conversation and is relieved to hear that the Valemen will survive. His short-lived relief is broken when he realizes Hendel is probably dead as a timid Stor says the Gnomes found a shredded a body in the woods.

Chapter 10 - 12 Analysis

In chapter 10, the reader learns that Dayel leaves a fiancé behind and Shea wonders why such a young, personable man would come on this quest instead of staying home with his fiancé. Balinor tells Shea everyone on the quest has things to lose but someone has to step up. Even taciturn Hendel has a wife and family at home that he seldom sees because he is fighting the Gnomes. This explains why the Gnomes hate Hendel so much. Balinor also describes the Elf King, Eventine as a well-liked king who does what is needed.

Flick asks the two elves what is the sword's secret but only Allanon knows. They only know that the sword fights the dark. Later on, Flick is the one who thinks of Menion shooting the arrow to the bridge. Allanon praises Flick's idea and says he has earned his own right to be on the quest aside from being Shea's brother. Shea feels he has not yet pulled his weight.

In chapter 11, Allanon does not think whatever is in the valley is intelligent but turns out to be wrong when the creature removes the ties. From this mistake, we know the Druid is not omniscient.

The valley is a less rough route, so of course the party opts for that direction. The description of the prewar city sounds like skyscrapers in earth's major cities and the creature sounds like a mutation of science and organic life that might appear after a nuclear war. Unfortunately, Shea's curiosity pulls him further into the city, and he and Flick are almost killed. If it is earth, the old expression about curiosity killing the cat has not been remembered.

The remaining members of the group create stretchers and begin to carry the Valemen forward. They encounter a large number of Gnomes, which does not bode well for the survival of the entire group.

In chapter 12, all members of the company realize they must find a way through the pass or the entire mission fails. Menion grabs the Elfstones, but Balinor reminds him that the stones only work against the shadow creatures. Also, the unconscious Shea is the only one who can control them.

Balinor's ingenuity saves them, which indicates what a master strategist the prince can and will be. He proposes that Menion shoot a Gnome while Hendel takes the blame for



the shot. Once again the depth of Menion's personality is displayed because he is unable to kill an unarmed, unaware enemy, opting to plant an arrow in the butt of a Gnome. Also, Hendel's bravery and willingness to sacrifice, even finding humor in tormenting the Gnomes, shows another side to the seemingly grumpy dwarf.

After escaping the Gnomes, Allanon appears in the company of healer Gnomes called Stors. Menion is ready to defend the group but is halted by Balinor. As usual Menion Leah is ready to rush in without a lot of foresight. Balinor says they must trust the Druid or all is lost.

On the trip to Storlock, Allanon apologizes for leaving them and explains that he did not realize the intelligence of the creature they were going to face. It is unusual to see Allanon apologize, so maybe even he is learning something on this journey.



Chapter 13 - 15

Chapter 13 - 15 Summary

In chapter 13, Shea and Flick are well after the Stors' medicine but are distressed when Menion tells them about Hendel's sacrifice. Allanon announces their plans to leave the next day and says they will go through the forbidden Hall of Kings. Allanon assures them that he has made it in and out alive. Halfway through the trip the next day, Durin tells them that someone is following closely behind. Balinor and Menion remain behind and discover that Hendel survived. Allanon, the elves, and the Valeman continue to the lake of Hadeshorn. At the lake, the Druid tells them he alone can approach the lake. He casts a spell and the group sees a shade rise from the lake and speak to Allanon. He explains that it is the Shade of Bremen who said that one member of the group will not make it to Paranor but that person will be the first to touch the sword.

In chapter 14, the reunited group continues to follow Allanon through the treacherous, cold mountains called the Dragon's Teeth. About midday, they arrive at the entrance to the Hall of Kings. The Druid tells them they must be tied together and they must not get separated. In the first corridor blindfolds will keep the Sphinxes from turning them to stone. In the second corridor they must insert earplugs to prevent the Banshees' screams from driving anyone insane. All must concentrate on Allanon and think only of him. Several times their willpower begins to fade, but Allanon's voice speaks in their minds urging everyone forward. Finally, they arrive at the most dangerous part, the tomb of the Hall of Kings.

Allanon announces that he is unable to hide the entire group from the creature that guards the remainder of the passageways. As they go by a pool they hear hissing and a serpent of amazing strength attacks the group. Flick and Hendel are knocked unconscious during the fight and the elves and Shea drag Flick out. Balinor carries Hendel away from the fight, and Menion and Allanon finally kill the creature. Menion limps out and seconds later, Allanon appears and the journey continues. They emerge from the caverns into the Dragon's Crease when the mountain starts shaking as they move down the twists and turns. A tremor causes Shea's portion of the trail to collapse. He grabs a rock, but before Allanon can get help another shudder loosens the Valeman's grip and he falls into the rushing waters far below.

In chapter 15, Allanon says they must continue the quest even though they do not know Shea's fate. Allanon speaks to the dead and learns Shea is a captive of a group of Gnomes. They want to go rescue him but Allanon reminds them of the prophecy and says Shea will be the one to see the sword and has the Elfstones for protection.

After washing ashore, Shea is captured by the Gnomes who take his Elfstones. In the meantime, Allanon helps the group safely through the protections surrounding Paranor such as wolves and poison thorns. They arrive at Druid's Keep through a hidden door



and go to the furnace room of the castle. A Skull Bearer appears on the walkway ahead and says the Master expects them and will destroy Allanon.

Chapter 13 - 15 Analysis

In chapter 13, Shea is glad both he and Flick have survived but is saddened to hear from Menion about the brave, tragic death of Hendel. Menion explains to the Valeman about the Stors and their fantastic medicine. It is made from the water of a pond in the Storlock. They walk to the water and the peaceful waters of the pond cause each of them to reflect on their mission. The Elves say the pond reminds them of their home. Dayel compares his fiancé to the beauty of the pond and his desire to return home is evident. Shea once again asks if everyone is sure they are doing the right thing by going on this quest and asks if their question will really work. Shea still has doubts about their mission and himself. They also discuss the sword and wonder if it can really work against the Master. Balinor quietly appears and they are relieved it is he hearing the discussion and not the Druid. He once again says they need to trust in Allanon and focus on their mission even though the Druid has not told the whole tale. Menion feels Balinor is a great leader and people put their trust in him. They do not trust Allanon but their trust in Balinor keeps the group together and focused.

Allanon joins them at the pond and imparts more information on the direction they will go the next day. He also tells Shea not to use the Elfstones because they reveal the location of the party to the spirit world and the Master. When he says they are going through the Hall of Kings everyone voices their concern. The rumor is that nobody can escape the hall alive. Doubts plague the group but they all realize they have come this far and must continue to trust the group and learn to trust the Druid. Allanon's talk with the shade and his ability to go through the Hall of Kings implies that Druids are very close to the spirit world and their ability to put off death gives them the ability to walk in both the physical and spirit world. This is a hint that Druids might not be fully human by cheating death for so many years.

In chapter 14, the cold isolates them from each other, which forces them to reflect on the journey so far. Doubts and fears plague them and it begins to break their minds and spirits. Hendel does not have any doubts as he is just glad to be alive after being near death in the pass against the Gnomes. Meanwhile, the other members of the team are wondering who will be the one to die per the prophecy of the Shade.

The company successfully gets through the corridors before the Hall of Kings due to the power of Allanon's mind and will. If he can project thoughts into the minds of men, it follows that he can also read their minds.

When they get to the Hall, Menion looks longingly at all the treasure, but Allanon says it is coated in deadly poison. Menion is starting to think ahead, so he coats two arrows with the poison. His foresight in doing this seems to help weaken the creature although it is the Druid's blue flames that finally kills it.



The loss of Shea is partly his own fault as he is paying more attention to the harsh beauty of a waterfall and is quite a distance behind the others. His desire to explore the pre-war city also resulted in catastrophe. Hopefully he will learn from his mistakes and not be such a dreamer.

In chapter 15, when Allanon say they must continue the quest, Menion wants to charge ahead to find Shea. This almost causes a fight with the Druid. It is not the first time Leah has almost come to blows with Allanon. Leah's impulsiveness seems destined to get him into trouble. The Skull Bearer thinks Flick is the last heir of Shannara, which might save Shea in the future because the Master's focus is on Flick.

Flick thinks of Shea's bravery and is bitter that Shea is gone and did not recognize his own bravery before he died. The Valeman remembers Allanon can talk to the dead so he asks him to find out if Shea is dead. The Druid says this will show the Warlock Lord where they are but says he will do as they ask. When he does locate Shea, the Druid tells the group that Shea is fine and the Elfstones will protect him. This is a switch as he has told Shea not to use the stones. No one in the group remembers he has told Shea this or if they do remember, they do not say anything, which helps alleviate their worries and enables them to continue with their quest. Once again Allanon has stretched the truth to get people to follow his agenda.



Chapter 16 - 19

Chapter 16 - 19 Summary

In chapter 16, Allanon tells the group to head to the stairs but Flick stays behind and watches the Skull Bearer and Allanon fall into the fire pit. Flick flees and gets lost in the hallways of Druid Keep.

Meanwhile Durin and Dayel are first through the door and are attacked by Gnomes. Fortunately, the creatures do not notice the rest of the group and are quickly defeated. They find the stone that houses the sword and discover it is missing. They assume the sword is in the Tower and head up the stairs. To their relief they spot the sword only to notice it vanishing as the door closes and they find themselves trapped in the Tower.

Chapter 17 is In the Skull Kingdom, where the Warlock Lord sends the Skull Bearers to kill the men trapped in the tower. He knows he has won the war by killing the men and stopping them from retrieving the Sword of Shannara.

At Paranor, Allanon finds Flick and rescues the men trapped in the tower. The war is not over and Allanon feels the Warlock Lord will turn his attention to the destruction of Callahorn now that he thinks everyone in the group is dead.

In chapter 18, Shea is headed north as the Gnomes' prisoner. A scarlet figure with a pike for a left hand appears out of the dark, cuts Shea's bonds, and tells him to head for the trees. The self-assured fighter introduces himself as Panamon Creel and his companion is a Rock Troll named Keltset. The men search the Gnomes and find the Elfstones. Shea states that the Elfstones are his, but Creel refuses to return the stones. Shea asks that they all head to Paranor. Creel angrily refuses but eventually relents and they head to Paranor.

In chapter 19, the three travel on to Paranor and discover a fierce battle has taken place. Dead Gnomes and Elves litter the field. Creel recognizes a banner as being from the house of Elessedil and wonders why Eventine was part of the fight.

Creel is distracted from questioning Shea when a Skull Bearer lands. The creature senses the sword and demands they give it to him. The Rock Troll attacks the creature as does Creel. Shea begs to help with the Elfstones but is told to keep out of the fight. When all else fails, the thief finally gives Shea the stones. The creature turns and notices the blue light and responds by shooting red bolts at Shea. The Elfstones and Keltset kill the monster. Since Shea saves their lives with the stones, Creel lets him keep them. The Rock Troll notices something moving in the bushes so Keltset springs into the bushes.



Chapter 16 - 19 Analysis

In chapter 16, Flick wants to flee as well but is held enraptured by the struggle between two powerful beings. The monster notices Flick and uses him as a distraction. They discover the Warlock Lord knew they would be at the keep. Once again Brona knows the plan of the group ahead of time. Flick leaps out of harm's way but Allanon and the creature fall into the fire. Typically a main character does not die this early in a quest and this is the Druid's home so he must know a way to survive the fire.

The remainder of the group searches for the sword and they head to the tower where it is supposed to be hidden. They spring and survive several traps in the tower and feel confident that they will find the sword. Anytime a character gets overconfident, circumstances smack them down. Apparently, the Warlock Lord is almost always one step ahead and is observing events in a basin of water.

In chapter 17, the glimpse into the conditions in the Skull Kingdom reveals a sad, depressed land. Even the minions are treated poorly and it foreshadows the potential fallout for the world if Brona wins the war.

The Warlock Lord's basin of water shows him that Allanon and his group are dead. Brona's arrogance does not account for the intelligence of his foes and that is ultimately his downfall. He does not respect anyone's ability because he is so sure that he is the most powerful being on the planet. Sure that he no longer has any opposition, he turns his attention to Callahorn.

In Chapter 18, Shea is rescued from the Gnome's by a thief named Panamon Creel. He only attacked the Gnomes because he sees the Gnome leader examine the Elfstones by the fire. Saving Shea was just a consequence of the thievery. The selfishness of Creel is immediately obvious; however, he could have left Shea to die, so he seems to show reluctant concern for others.

After Shea's rescue, Creel tells untrue tales about him and Keltset, such as they have been companions for two years. Creel's lack of knowledge about the Troll proves to be a problem later. It never occurs to the thief to look at the motivations of the Rock Troll and wonder if he has his own purpose and issues. Shea is under the impression that Rock Trolls are violent and no smarter than animals so he is wary of Keltset. Ultimately, he decides Creel is probably the more dangerous of the two. Shea should have taken the time to learn more about the Troll and the thief before traveling with the men.

Shea demands they return the Elfstones and lead him to Paranor. Creel says no because it is a horrible, evil place. He has nothing to gain and does not realize the danger to himself and the world. Shea pretends to doubt their courage so to enrage Creel and get him to agree to lead him to Paranor. Shea stands firm and it is the first time he fights for the mission. He shows bravery and a belief in himself and his purpose. Panamon Creel finally agrees and they head towards Paranor.



In chapter 19, Creel talks incessantly on one subject after another much to Shea's dismay, especially since Creel says nothing important. He does not question Shea, which is surprising as one would expect him to be more curious about the Valeman. Maybe he does not want to know because then he might feel obligated to help or reveal something about himself. Shea wonders about the Rock Troll since Creel said he was ostracized by the other Trolls. Shea does not think this is true because the Troll carries himself like a king and his eyes reveal intelligence. The Troll is mute, which is what helps him maintain the appearance of stupidity and prevents anyone from asking too many questions about his past.

The dead bodies on the plain make Shea realize that this is a life-threatening quest. Creel notices Shea's marked interest in the battle, but they are distracted by a Skull Bearer. Shea realizes he needs to learn to guard his tongue.

Keltset is immediately recognized by the Skull Bearer so we know Keltset must be more than an outcast. Also, the Troll's anger towards the Master reveals interest in destroying the evil. The Troll may know more about Shea and his purpose than anyone realizes, even his friend, Creel.

Creel is struck dumb by the appearance of the Skull Bearer. It is obvious he has no idea of about the advance of evil into the four lands, which is surprising if he is as well traveled as he claims. Panamon is shocked by Shea's use of the stones against the Skull Bearer and realizes there is far more to the Valeman than he ever suspected and demands an explanation.



Chapter 20 - 23

Chapter 20 - 23 Summary

In chapter 20, Panamon, Shea and Keltset find a Gnome hiding in the bushes with a sack of weapons and coins. Orl Fane is a deserter but he swears he knows the location of the Sword of Shannara. The importance of Fane's information keeps him alive. The group ties him up so that they can question him later.

Shea tells his new friends about his quest and his relationship with the Sword of Shannara. They believe his story and plan to help him find the sword. Everyone heads to bed and the next morning Shea wakes to find Orl Fane has escaped with the sword but not the sack of junk. They all realize the sword they thought was junk was the Sword of Shannara.

In chapter 21, Allanon is worried when Shea and the Sword are not at Paranor because he had seen Shea headed there in his search through the spirit world. He tells the remaining members of the group that it is time to split up and protect the people from the Warlock Lord's army. Hendel heads to Anar to warn his people while Balinor and the Elves head to Callahorn to protect Kern, Tyrsis, and the Southlands. Allanon, Flick, and Menion continue on to find Shea and the Sword of Shannara.

Along the way, Allanon's group encounters a massive army poised to destroy Callahorn. Allanon orders Menion to leave and warn Balinor about the size and strength of the army about to attack his home. The Druid devises a way to learn the army's plans and asks Flick if he would be willing to temporarily be a Gnome.

In chapter 22, Balinor, Hendel, and the elves head toward Callahorn to warn everyone about the approach of Brona's armies. The Prince knows that if Tyrsis falls, the remaining areas do not stand much of a chance. He also hopes his brother has come to his senses and will welcome him with open arms. Upon arriving at Tyrsis, they notice the Border Legion has been disbanded; the city is in upheaval; the king is ill, and that Palance Buckhannah is the interim king. Balinor feels he must confront his brother even though the loyal Captain Sheelon has told Balinor he should not enter the palace. A crazed Palance traps the party in a net giving them no chance to talk. He arrests and throws them in the dungeons, accusing them of treachery against the people and also blaming Balinor for the loss of Shirl.

In chapter 23, Allanon disguises Flick as a Gnome and sends him into the army's camp to search for Shea. In the camp, Flick discovers a heavily guarded tent that he hopes houses Shea. Before he can find a way into the tent, Brona's army starts marching south. Allanon watches the army leave and has no choice but to travel near it hoping to see Flick escape.



Meanwhile, Menion heads toward Kern to warn the people that they must escape the city before Brona's armies arrive. Arriving at the Mermidion, the waterway surrounding Kern, he sees a human talking with four Trolls. The bundle they have moves so thinking it might be Shea, Leah waits until an opportune time, attacks the Trolls, and grabs the bundle. After eluding the Trolls and too tired to carry the bundle further, he stops, opens the bag, and discovers that he has just rescued a woman.

Chapter 20 - 23 Analysis

In chapter 20, the thief, troll and elf capture a Gnome with a sack of junk. The Gnome known as Orl Fane keeps talking about the Sword of Shannara, and Shea's interest in the sword indicates to the others that there is more to Shea's story than previously told.

Fane's behavior is erratic and slightly obsessive about his junk. More appears to be affecting his behavior than his deserting the army or some useless junk. His behavior foreshadows the affect the sword can have on a person. Panamon and Shea rest while Keltset removes their trail.

While the troll is absent, Shea asks Panamon about Keltset. Both men realize that Keltset is more powerful than first realized and appears to have issues with the Warlock Lord. Panamon says that he does not care about Keltset's past because he trusts him and they are friends. Keltset's secrets appear to be numerous and the poor relationship with the Warlock Lord indicates future issues for the group. They dismiss the Gnome until morning and proceed to bed.

The next morning they wake to find the Gnome escaped without his sack. He took only one sword. They all realize that it must be the Sword of Shannara. It seems that one of the effects of the sword is madness.

In chapter 21, Allanon being worried about Shea shows an unexpected vulnerable side. The Warlock Lord's overconfidence is the only advantage the group has since the quest for the sword seems to have failed. When Allanon tells the others to go home to prepare for the invasion, Menion and Flick are furious that he is forgetting about Shea. Menion is still showing an impulsive side by getting angry before the full plan is revealed and Allanon chides him for it. Flicks even temper and bravery show when he calmly refuses to give up the search for his brother. The Border Legion can only hold off Brona's army for a certain amount of time so Shea and the Sword are still essential to winning the war.

Allanon finds ashes, which means the Elfstones have been used against a Skull Bearer by Shea; Allanon seems proud of Shea's abilities to use the stones. They also find signs of Eventine and a Troll so they worry that the King and Shea are now captives of the enemy. While continuing the search for Shea, the three encounter Brona's army, which is larger than anyone could have ever imagined. Each member of the group feels a moment of despair and worries that the Warlock Lord may win if they cannot find Shea. Allanon orders Menion to warn Balinor about the size of the army. Another altercation



with the Druid almost occurs, but when Allanon points out that the fate of many rest on this warning, Menion angrily agrees, even though he wants to be the one to find Shea. Leah still has a ways to go to mature into the type of leader needed for his highland city.

In chapter 22, on the long trip home, Balinor reflects on the state of his relationship with his brother Palance Buckhannah. He loves his brother and wants to believe that Palance's behavior has changed while Balinor was away. Hendel warns Balinor that trusting his brother is a mistake. Balinor's love and belief in the basic good of his family shows why he is respected not only for his status and ability to fight, but because he makes every effort to understand the motivations of people and forgive them. Unfortunately, Balinor's belief in the basic good of people makes him naïve and puts him in danger when he enters his kingdom.

When they arrive at Callahorn, the group discovers that the Border Legion no longer exists. Even if the army can be reformed quickly, a lack of practice and time prevents the effectiveness of the defense. The group is afraid and they know if they cannot get an army together quickly, the Warlock Lord will win.

At the palace, the group approaches Palance who calls Balinor a traitor and has the entire group arrested and thrown in the dungeons. Their arrest delays the formation of the army even longer, which makes the reader wonder if someone in Tyrasis is manipulating the situation and working for the Warlock Lord. During Balinor's arrest, Palance keeps screaming at his brother about Shirl. The reader knows Shirl is a key to Palance's anger and will have an effect on the outcome of the battle for control of Callahorn. Even if the group escapes, every minute preparations are not being made to defend the city is another win for the Warlock Lord.

In chapter 23, With the coming of dawn and no sign of Flick, Allanon is starting to think the Valeman has been discovered. He is upset, but when the camp begins to move on he finally turns south paralleling their travel so he can still offer aid if needed.

Leah almost decides to continue on after seeing the Trolls, which is what Allanon would have expected of him as his mission is critical. But Leah is always thinking about Shea and still is unable to totally think of the better good. His impulsiveness is at work again.

The description of the stranger with the Trolls gives us foresight into the mystic that controls Palance. Many events that occur in the chapters seem insignificant at the time but turn out to be important later.



Chapter 24 - 26

Chapter 24 - 26 Summary

In chapter 24, Menion is shocked to find he rescued a woman. He realizes he has no time to ask questions if they are to escape, so they run for the river and head out in a boat. Menion passes out on the boat ride and wakes up in Kern. Shirl Ravenlock enters the room and introduces herself.

She tells Menion that Tyrsis has been warned of the approaching army and the flooded river will keep them from Kern. She also says she is of royal blood as well as imparting other information. Leah says they must evacuate Kern as the size of the army is huge and the city will fall. A small force of 200 will attack as a decoy while the rest of the city floats out on the river. This plan works, but Kern is burned to the ground in retaliation.

In chapter 25, Balinor and the two Elf brothers are in his brother's dungeon when he needs to be preparing to defend Tyrsis. Palance visits Balinor there but just rambles and then leaves. As he exits with Stenmin, the mystic mentions that Captain Sheelon, who Balinor had asked to spread the word of his return, is also in prison. This distresses him as he has asked Sheelon to get aid for him and to reorganize the Legion. Meanwhile, Hendel has come back, tries to rescue Balinor, and is imprisoned with Balinor.

In chapter 26, Shea is upset that Orl Fane has escaped with the Sword and feels if he had remembered the prophecy he would now have it. Creel says they are going after him even though they may have to go into the dark wall they see to the north. They tie a rope between them to enter the dark, which enables Shea to save them because the heat of the Elfstones brings him out of the deathly daze the dark wall creates. After exiting the mist, they look for signs of the Gnome. They finally spot him ahead of them on the trail but are unable to give chase as a life threatening storm is approaching and they have to seek shelter.

Chapter 24 - 26 Analysis

In chapter 24, Leah feels the plan to evacuate Kern has to be kept secret because the kidnapping of Shirl was obviously an inside job. The enemy camp numbers in the thousands, stretching as far as the eye can see. Yet the small number of the Border Legion that Janus Senpre commands totally disrupts the huge dark force as they think a large army of men is attacking. Menion's "small" sneak assault works so well that he is a hero to the population of Kern, not only for his warning and idea but because he rescued the beloved Shirl.

In chapter 25, Palance rambles about his beloved Shirl being kidnapped and believes Balinor is responsible. His craziness is fed by the evil Stenmin who is drugging him, which enables Stenmin to control the Prince. Unfortunately, the mystic's plans are going awry because his drugs make the Palance incapable of coherent thought, and the



people of Callahorn will soon notice. Neither man realizes Shirl has been rescued by Menion.

Meanwhile, Hendel is nervous in underground places since the dwarfs once lived underground because of the holocaust, but he bravely tries to save his friends anyway. Hendel is always sacrificing himself for friends, family, and the greater good, despite the uncaring front that he puts forward to others.

In chapter 26, when Creel says they are going after Orl Fane, it surprises Shea, but Shea realizes it is because Panamon feels stupid that another thief has outwitted him. Shea does not care what the reason is as long as he can get the Sword back. The mist saps everyone's will and has completed Orl Fane's descent into madness. Unfortunately, Fane is being drawn onward toward Skull Mountain anyway.

When the severe storm appears, Keltset carries Shea to shelter because he is continuing to follow Fane, despite the life-threatening conditions. Shea's determination and bravery is quite a change from the doubtful, disbelieving Shea that first heard Allanon's tales. Creel rationalizes with him and gets him to calm down by saying they will have no trouble finding the Gnome once the barrage is over. Panamon tells more stories of his life as they wait for the storm to pass, and Shea feels these reminiscences may be true for a change and Creel is finally opening up and becoming more than a thief.



Chapter 27 & 28

Chapter 27 & 28 Summary

In chapter 27, Flick is still in the Gnome camp when he fears he is discovered but instead he realizes the Gnome wants help delivering food to the Trolls guarding the very tent he wants to enter. He finds the Elf King, Eventine is the captive and says one word to him, Allanon. Later in the dark, wet night, Flick frees the Elf by cutting a hole in the tent. As they flee, they have to fight Gnomes, and Eventine is badly injured in the second fight.

As they pass the far sentry, their luck runs out and the King no longer has the strength to fight. Flick calls for Allanon who hears and rescues them by using wizard fire on the pursuing Northlanders.

In chapter 28, the people of Kern arrive in Tyrsis and Leah is one of the last through the gates. A carriage is waiting for Menion and Shirl and they drive to the palace and are welcomed like royalty, which is odd in a time of war. That night, Stenmin enters Leah's room with the intent to kill him, but the hunter in Menion hears and seizes the mystic's dagger. He then makes Stenmin take him to the cellar where Balinor is imprisoned. He does get the prisoners through the trap door only to have Palance enter the cellar.

Chapter 27 & 28 Analysis

In chapter 27, Flick's courage is a thing to behold in the Gnome camp. The Elf must have been surprised at being rescued by one lone man. Flick has gone from quite the homebody to brave hero.

During the escape, Flick calls out in desperation for Allanon when the King can not go on, which shows he is now confident in the Druid's abilities. At first Flick only sees a tall dark shape coming out of the night and feels dread but is then relieved to see it is Allanon. The reader cannot help wondering what secret Allanon is hiding because he is still portrayed as a dark, scary figure. Allanon keeps himself secluded from the others by appearing intimidating and mysterious.

In chapter 28, when Leah sees the turnout for them at the palace, he knows Palance must be as mad as the rumors have said. Palance seems to be ignoring the fact that an army bent on destroying Tyrsis is headed their way. Shirl suggests caution when they meet the Prince because they need to find Balinor but not indicate Menion is a friend of the Prince Balinor. The meeting with Palance does go well, which means they have a chance to find Balinor. Perhaps Shirl will be a steadying influence on Menion, who now knows he loves her.



Chapter 29 & 30

Chapter 29 & 30 Summary

In chapter 29, when the mystic realizes Palance has entered the cellar, he calls Balinor a traitor and claims Balinor was the one who kidnapped Shirl. Palance begins to ramble and even tells Stenmin he is "pathetic." He refuses to kill his brother even on Stenmin's orders. The mystic realizes he is losing Palance's attention. Stenmin pulls out his dagger, stabs Palance, and throws him against Leah. He flees with Balinor, Durin, and Dayel in pursuit. Hendel hits him with a mace but even this does not stop the mystic. Balinor is slowed down when the palace doors crash open and his Border Legion friends enter putting him on their shoulders in victory. They do not know they are hindering his pursuit and Stenmin subsequently escapes.

Balinor is now King of Callahorn as his father is dead and Palance is near death. He immediately begins planning the strategy to defend Tyrsis. Janus Senpre rounds up the Legion commanders Ginnisson, Acto, and Messaline. He tells his friends he is going with his five Legions to the river in the morning and asks Hendel, the two Elves, and Menion to stay with Janus to defend the city. Balinor leaves and does not come back until dark. He lost the fight at the river and has come back to defend Tyrsis. He tells them hundreds of Gnomes and Trolls were killed but there are thousands. They just kept coming because the Warlock has such control of their minds. Now the enemy is camped on the grasslands in front of Tyrsis.

In chapter 30, the storm is past so Shea, Creel and Keltset continue the search for Orl Fane. The storm lasts three days so Shea is worried the Gnome would be too far ahead to find, but Creel points out that the thief had to seek shelter as well. At first there is no sign of Orl Fane, but then Keltset finds a piece of his sleeve almost buried. They continue on when Creel suddenly finds tracks leading toward the Skull Kingdom. Near dusk, a dozen Rock Trolls surround the group and Keltset lets them be captured rather than fighting.

Meanwhile, Jon Lin Sandor and Eventine's brother, Breen Elessedil are searching for Eventine. Their government is suffering because of the missing King. He is a strong leader beloved by the people, so the Elves find it hard to go to war without him. If Eventine is the Warlock's captive, the Elves may not fight if it risks his life. Jon Lin spots a horseman on the Plain of Streleheim and can tell he is a Southlander. The horseman tells the Elf he is Flick Ohmsford and he has come to tell them he knows the location of Eventine.

The trolls take the three captives to their camp. Shea and Panamon are later both taken to sit in a circle of Trolls. Creel tells him this is a trial for Keltset. It does not seem to be going well when Keltset pulls a pendant out and puts it on. This pendant is a big symbol among the Trolls and means Keltset has not betrayed his people. Through sign language he tells about the deception of the Warlord, the slaughter of his family, and



explains why these Trolls should help Shea and him go to Skull Mountain and destroy Brona.

Chapter 29 & 30 Analysis

In chapter 29, the war is already proving to be harsh and there is too much loss of lives on both sides. When Balinor gets back, he is discouraged by the sheer number of the enemy soldiers. How can they hope to defeat so many with so few? He feels their main chance is to try to keep the city from falling until the Elves can arrive to help them.

Hendel has a feeling that there is something he is forgetting about the city. He worries and keeps reviewing the defenses in his mind but can not figure out what is bothering him. This uneasiness foreshadows an event in the coming fight for the city.

Much self-reflection goes on in the minds of the main characters the night before the battle to defend the city. Leah wonders about the Warlock and Allanon and what the motivations of both Druids might be. The five friends feel their lives will never be the same again.

In chapter 30, Shea does not understand why they do not fight the Trolls and is afraid they have been betrayed. Creel is even more upset because he has believed Keltset is a friend. Keltset is more of a friend than anyone ever imagined. They find out that Brona was responsible for the Troll being a mute as well as destroying his family because they had refused to accept the rule of Brona. The Warlock made it look as if Dwarf looters had killed Keltset's family. The sneaky aspect of the Warlock shows that the Trolls are not inherently evil and only trickery makes them serve him. Makes the reader wonder if the Gnomes are also evil or just being manipulated.



Chapter 31 & 32

Chapter 31 & 32 Summary

In chapter 31, Palance finally dies from the stab wound from Stenmin. The attack on Tyrsis begins with the vast army advancing and pushing their ramps to aid in scaling the bluff. Three of the five ramps avoid the concealed pits so they have to be burned by the defenders. The fire makes a lot of smoke so Balinor has Janus open the gates and a mounted regiment goes out to attack the right flank of the enemies while foot soldiers attack the front. Leah says it looks like Acton may be pushing the Northlanders back. Balinor says it is too early to tell and as the battle continues the fighting is more vicious. When Acton is killed in the final fight that night, it is a great loss for the Border Legion.

Meanwhile, the Trolls are taking Creel, Keltset and Shea to the Skull Kingdom. They seem to be prisoners when in reality the Trolls are helping Shea get in to retrieve the Sword. In the valley, Shea sees the mutens for the first time. A Muten then leads them into a cavern full of cells. The lead Troll kills the Muten and Keltset frees Creel and Shea. They open a cell door to find Orl Fane. The Gnome will not give up the sword so Panamon bashes him on the head. Shea hesitates to touch the Sword but then finally gathers the courage and picks it up.

In chapter 32, the fight to protect the Southlands is ferocious and appears never ending. The Northlanders continue to advance and the Border Legion keeps hope alive and fights despite the loss of many friends.

Eventine and Flick watch the fight in the forest that surrounds Tyrsis and hope the Elven army hurries. Inside the fortress, Hendel is concerned that Brona's army is forming another sneaky plan. He is trying to figure out what they are missing and why the army seems overconfident. Panic sets in when he realizes there is a secret tunnel under the fortress. Menion and Hendel race to the wine cellar to stop the invasion from under the Palace. They kill the few invaders that have entered but Hendel dies in the process. Leah does get the trap door closed and kills Stenmin.

At the gates of Tyrsis, the Trolls succeed in battering the gate and enter by the Outer Wall. Balinor and his Border Legion fight the Trolls and Durin gets caught underneath the feet of the men in the fight. Just as despair was settling in for the Southlanders, the Elven army joins the battle.

Chapter 31 & 32 Analysis

In chapter 31, when Palance dies, Balinor says nothing. The reader knows that despite everything his brother did that Balinor still remembers the love they shared as children. Just because you do not like everything about those you love, it does not mean that it is easy to stop loving someone, especially when the ties run deeply.



Balinor's first tactic in the fight is bold, but creating the unusual is why Balinor is a good leader and the Border Legion has always done well in defending the Southland. The overwhelming odds may be why they are currently losing the war and is not reflection on the great leadership of Balinor.

When Creel finally gets the chance to kill Orl Fane, he tells Shea it is not worth it. The Gnome has become such a pathetic being that it seems to even move Creel's heart.

In chapter 32, the battle at Tyrsis is going strong and each man is trying not to let the fear of failure set into their hearts and minds. The men hear the Gnomes drums, which indicate a no mercy policy and their belief in their ability to win.

The Gnome's overconfidence and Hendel's mention of Stenmin foreshadows the mystic's knowledge of the palace and an alternative route into the city. Hendel realizes that the old King had mentioned tunnels under Tyrsis. The Dwarf and Menion race to the wine cellars to fight the influx of Brona's army and Stenmin. Hendel escapes death multiple times in the book against insurmountable odds, but this time his luck runs out. His death completes the change in Menion's personality. Menion knows that he wants to be a better person and realizes the importance of fighting for the greater good. His previous attitude about having a great time adventuring is quashed in the wake of the death, destruction, and sacrifice he witnesses.

The Elven army arrives just as the Border Legion is starting to fade, which renews their spirits. Just seeing the army inspires hope, which goes to show that both small and big events can change the course of a battle.



Chapter 33 & 34

Chapter 33 & 34 Summary

In chapter 33, Shea picks up the Sword of Shannara while Creel, Keltset, and Orl Fane watch. At first nothing happens, then suddenly, warmth goes through Shea's body and he feels connected to the sword. He is ill-prepared for the sword's power, which shows the truth about a person's true nature to those who touch the Sword. Unfortunately, Shea does not understand how the truth can hurt Brona and panics. He wants to flee but knows it is too late to escape. When Shea touches the Sword of Shannara, the Warlock Lord wakes from his sleep and materializes to confront the Valeman. Quickly dispatching with Creel and Keltset, he beats down the will of Shea with his mind.

Meanwhile, Allanon senses Shea finds the Sword and rushes from Callahorn towards the Skull Kingdom. He regrets not telling the Valeman more about the Sword of Shannara and how to handle the truth. The Druid is terrified that Brona is going to win and destroy Shea. Just as Shea's resistance is almost gone, Allanon interrupts the thoughts of Brona with his own. He gives the Valeman the courage he needs to lift the sword and face the Warlock Lord. As the Sword of Shannara touches Brona, he dies unable to come to terms with the truth of his existence.

Back in Tyrsis, the war between Brona's armies and the Border Legion continues. A sudden wind blows through Callahorn and earthquakes start splitting the lands and forests. The Skull Bearers die in the sky and everyone forgets to fight. All of the people on land watch the weather change and the death of Brona's minions.

The earthquakes are everywhere in the four lands and Skull Mountain begins to crumble. Shea, Creel, and Keltset run out of the mountain but before they escape, Keltset dies holding up a wall of falling rocks so that the others may escape. A monster chases the two remaining men and Creel stays behind to stop the muten and give Shea time to escape.

In chapter 34, Shea continues to walk after escaping Skull Mountain. He is in poor condition and drained, so he does not even notice Allanon as Allanon runs up and hugs him. After sleep, Shea asks the Druid if he found any other survivors, to which the answer is no. The Elfstones are also missing but Allanon assures him that Shea no longer needs them.

Shea continues to ask questions of Allanon until Shea drifts back to sleep. The Druid says good-bye to Shea but Shea does not hear him. When Shea awakens, he sees Eventine's Elves who found him and sees that Allanon is gone to have the Druid sleep of recovery.



Chapter 33 & 34 Analysis

In chapter 33, the Sword of Shannara bonds with Shea and shows him the truth about himself. Despite all of Shea's self-reflection throughout the book, he is still not sure of his purpose and worth. He also has not accepted the real reason that he left the Vale. Shea is angry and upset when the Sword shows him that he left not to help his family, but because he was afraid and selfish. He almost refuses to accept the reasoning but realizes it is the truth—and he still did what was necessary to save his family. Just because the reasoning is not initially pure of heart does not make the person any less brave and it does not stop Shea from ultimately doing the right thing for the right reason.

Orl Fane attempts to steal back the Sword from Shea but dies in his last try to steal the Sword. Fane is insane from all that the Sword told him during his journey to the Skull Kingdom and each subsequent touch of the Sword shows Fane even more of his personality and shortcomings. He is incapable of accepting the good and bad about himself and dies because his physical body can no longer handle the constant beating by the truth. Orl Fane's death shows Shea the power of the Sword and instills him with the bravery to face the Warlock Lord. The reader has to wonder if Shea would have died if not for the sacrifice of Orl Fane. Every person, however insignificant, shapes the path of each person in this book. Goals and desires change because of the people they meet and how they interact with them.

Allanon's voice, Fane's death, and Shea's acceptance of himself allows him to lift the Sword and face the Warlock Lord. Brona is touched by the Sword and unable to accept that he is dead. His powers are the only thing keeping him in the physical world and the truth destroys the last part of his remaining self. In the end, it seems that the Warlock's fear of death and desire for power leave a legacy of evil, and his desires is what motivate his will to dominate the four lands.

In chapter 34, Shea asks Allanon why he never told him the secret of the sword, to which he replies that Shea had to find out himself. Some things one has to learn on one's own for them to be effective. Allanon tells Shea that Allanon wished Allanon had had more faith in Shea's abilities but was blinded by his own fear that Brona would win. The Druid reveals that Bremen is his father, which makes Allanon quite old. Since his father did not defeat the Warlock, he felt it was his duty, as the son and the last good Druid, to defeat Brona. Since the Warlock and Allanon are both Druids, the guilt would have been his for letting Brona win. Allanon knew it would be his fault if Brona dominated the earth because he is the last Druid with the knowledge that is capable of destroying the Master.



Chapter 35

Chapter 35 Summary

Ten days later Durin, Dayel, Balinor, Shea, Flick, and Menion Leah say their dispirited good-byes to each other amid promises to get together soon. Each heads home. Menion goes to the Vale first to make sure Shea gets home safely. He then plans to go home for a short while before he goes back to Shirl Ravenlock. The Sword is to reside in Tyrsis since they are best able to protect it.

At the Vale, Curzad Ohmsford enters the kitchen with news that another stranger is asking for Shea. It turns out to be Creel, alive and with the Elfstones.

Chapter 35 Analysis

Menion plans go back for Shirl Ravenlock because they have fallen in love. This is one of the happy events that takes place among all of the tragedies of war. Of course, the Warlocks demise is great as well, but the cost of the strife has been very high in lives.

Flick decides to stay home from now on. When Shea and Flick arrive home they do not tell their father of their adventures but continue life as usual. Their father feels a man's affairs are private and they should only discuss their tale if they want.

He is worried that the stranger's appearance means that the brothers will disappear again. But when he hears his sons' fear of the stranger in their dialogue, he goes into the other room with them saying that they must face their troubles. The fact that Creel shows up with the stones shows how much Creel has changed, as well as how much Creel values Shea.



Characters

Shea Ohmsford

Shea Ohmsford is one of the main protagonists in this fantasy. He is half human and half Elf but appears to look more like an Elf with his small, slim frame, slightly-pointed ears, blond hair, and eyebrows that go from his nose straight up. Shea is quick to trust and has a very forgiving nature. His devotion to family and friends forges a deep bond between Flick and Shea despite their being brothers in name only. He feels gratitude to Flick for his friendship even in the face of the many dangers they face throughout their travels in the quest for the sword. Brothers may love each other, but they do not have to like each other, so their friendship is especially valuable.

Shea thinks of himself as a simple Valeman who is content to work with his brother Flick at their father's Inn, until he learns he is the last remaining descendant of the legendary elf-king Jerle Shannara. Only descendants of Jerle can wield the magical Sword of Shannara, which is rumored to be the only way to defeat the evil Warlock Lord.

At first he is suspicious about the truth of his heritage and his role in defeating the Warlock Lord, but he realizes that his belief does that matter since both sides believe for him, which forces him to go on the quest for the Sword. He doubts his abilities throughout most of the quest despite being hunted by the Warlock Lord and the support of friends and family. Eventually he comes to terms with the fact that his actions show his bravery and his doubts cannot influence his decisions.

Shea is also ashamed that he has always liked living in the Southlands isolated from the rest of the races. He realizes that this attitude has put a lot of pressure on other people to protect his people. This poor attitude is brought home to him when he finds out about the Border Legions defense of his people and even the dwarf Hendel's service in protecting the Southlands.

In the end, when holding the Sword of Shannara, Shea realizes that despite his fears, insecurities, and doubts, he has proven his worth by continuing his quest and fighting for freedom, and he is able to face the truth - his doubts did not stop him from doing what needed to be done to succeed.

Flick Ohmsford

Flick Ohmsford is very different in attitude and appearance from his brother. Flick looks just like his father, Curzad, so it is apparent that Shea is adopted. Despite the fact that they are only distant cousins, they are as close as birth brothers.

Flick is short and stocky with brown hair and busy eyebrows making him look older than his years. He likes people and traveling places, which is unusual in most Southland humans who have isolated themselves from the other races after the last war.



Flick is also pessimistic and suspicious by nature, especially of anything Menion Leah does and about the stories told by Allanon. Flick balances his pessimism with his extreme loyalty and concern for others, which works well with his brother Shea's sunny nature. Flick is also a very cautious person so he finds many things frightening on this quest because everything is not ordered and controlled. Flick's love for Shea overshadows his cautious nature and he is willing to risk his life to be with his brother.

One such example of this is when Allanon changes Flick's appearance to look like a Gnome. Allanon asks him to go into the Gnome camp to look for Shea and the sword. Even though Flick feels certain he will die because he feels he is not clever enough to fool anyone, he does it for his brother. When Flick thinks he has been exposed as a fraud, he perseveres, surprised to find that the Gnomes have no idea who he is and he is getting away with the charade. Despite his fear and discovering Shea is not in the camp, he does find and save the current Elven king. Flick shows extreme bravery and concern for others. He could have fled but decided to help someone he had never met.

Despite his new self-confidence, Flick continues to think of home and wishes he were there. When he finally gets home, Flick does not even tell his father of the dangers he faced. Flick is not a bragger but a silent, reluctant hero.

Allanon

Allanon is an old Druid who has been around for an unknown number of years. He is introduced as a dark, tall, strong figure that appears dangerous and mysterious. Allanon reveals very little about himself keeping his thoughts, emotions, and motivations to himself. Much of what is known about the mysterious Druid is through rumor. According to the rumors he is a historian, mystic, and teacher.

Balinor, the Prince of Callahorn considers himself like a son to Allanon and still knows very little about the Druid. He knows Allanon is a good man and a descendant of the great Druid Bremen. Balinor says that the Druid is to be trusted and Allanon's actions seem to agree with this premise.

In the beginning of the book, the mystic's only interest seems to be in getting Shea to agree to the quest for the Sword. Allanon is quick to anger when Shea will not immediately believe his stories and upset when Flick refuses to leave his brother. Allanon is quick to anger, easily frustrated, and seems to dislike anyone interfering with the way he wants things done.

Later, in the forest with the Dwarfs, where the Druid is known and respected, he seems more comfortable, almost smiling and displaying happier emotions. He even tells Shea more about the quest and the past history of the four lands; however, he still expects everyone to follow him, trust him, and agree with his plans. When he mentions going through the Hall of the Kings and everyone panics, he just smiles mysteriously and tells them he made it out alive so they will, too. Allanon expects them to obey and not ask too many questions.



As the journey goes on, the Druid starts accepting suggestions from other members of the group and putting more faith in their abilities, such as Flick. He originally does not want Flick along but comes to realize that if the Valeman had not been there, they might not have been able to cross the chasm on the bridge and the Elven King might not have been saved. Allanon learns to accept that he does not have all the answers and he, too, must accept help from others.

In the end, he even regrets putting such a huge burden on Shea with very little explanation of how to use the Sword of Shannara. Allanon also wishes he had told Shea how proud Allanon is of Shea's bravery and that Allanon had been a better friend to the Valeman. Allanon learns to give more of himself, his plans, and accepts his own infallible nature. After all, he is only "human."

Balinor Buckhannah

Balinor is the Prince of Callahorn and the first in line for the throne behind his father, the King of Callahorn. The Prince is a tall man with a scar on his cheek and a calm but authoritative presence. He is highly respected by Allanon, Dwarfs, and humans alike and is a brilliant general. Balinor commands one of the most elite fighting forces called the Border Legion, which is designed to protect the Southlands.

Balinor appears to be unflappable, coming up with ingenious solutions to some of the more dangerous situations encountered on the quest. The group starts to panic when the Valemen are deathly ill and they encounter Gnomes in the only direction in which the group can proceed. Balinor asks everyone to be calm and devises a plan to shoot the Gnome Chieftain and have Hendel provide a distraction.

He also asks that Shea and Flick have faith in Allanon who is like a father to him. Balinor does not let his belief in the Druid stop him from questioning Allanon's decisions. When Allanon asks everyone to go through the Hall of Kings, Balinor questions the validity before putting the rest of the group in danger. He does not blindly believe in the Druid but accepts the explanation quickly showing Balinor's decisive leadership.

Balinor is not at home guiding the Border Legion and guarding his city because he is having issues with his brother. He inspires leadership but does not necessarily have the best interpersonal skills. Balinor's younger brother Palance is being influenced by an evil mystic, who wants Palance to make a play for the throne. Balinor refuses to see Palance as anything but misguided because his love blinds him to the insanity and evil that has changed Palance from the loving brother he once knew. Balinor's devotion to his family jeopardizes the quest and shows the human side to the great leader. In the end, the Prince learns that he is not infallible, which makes him a better, more understanding leader and a great friend.



Menion Leah

Menion Leah is the Prince of the Highland City of Leah and the only heir to the throne. Despite being one of the few remaining monarchies, Leah has no desire to be the heir. Instead, he prefers to hunt, track, and go on life-threatening adventures, partially to upset his father. He is so good at tracking and using his bow that even though Flick has no great love for Leah, he respects his skills.

Menion's ability to track is not perfectly honed because he gets Shea and Flick lost in the Black Oaks. His skill with the bow and arrow redeems his tracking skills when he saves the entire group twice with his bow. First, he makes a perfect shot to grab part of a bridge that has fallen into a mountain side and second, he hits the Gnome Chieftain in the buttocks without killing anyone.

Shea considers Leah a friend because of his well-developed sense of good and evil, as evidenced several times. Despite the fact the Gnome Chieftain is considered an enemy of Menion, Menion is unable to kill an unarmed enemy in a sneak attack. Also, when Shea goes missing, Menion insists on continuing the search to find his friend. Finally, Menion is ordered to go warn Balinor of the huge army approaching and despite Menion's reluctant agreement, he goes to help. Not only does he help but he warns and saves a princess and her people.

Menion learns the value of having respect and putting his abilities to good use on the quest. He also realizes he wants to become a better leader to his people when he sees his friends, especially Balinor not only defending his home but protecting the entire Southlands. Menion realizes if not for Balinor, his highland city might have been destroyed and he would have been ill prepared to help. In the end, Menion is a better leader and thinks more of other people and not just upsetting his father with worthless adventures.

Durin Elesedil

Durin Elesedil is the brother of Dayel and cousin of the current Elf King Eventine. He looks very similar to his brother also having the slight frame, pointed ears, and pale skin. He is always ready to help wherever he is needed without concern for his own well-being.

He and his brother's ability to slip up close to their enemies provide the group with a great deal of intelligence, and while the elf's help is subtle, it still saves lives. The other members of the group trust the elf instantly.

During the battle at Tyrsis, Durin almost dies defending the gates against the influx of Trolls. This was the first time the elf fought with both bow and sword against the enemy. His bravery against a much larger enemy shows his growth throughout the trip. Durin went from being quiet, subtle help, to bravely throwing himself into battle.



Dayel Elessedil

Dayel Elessedil is a full-blooded elf and the cousin of the Elf King Eventine. He has an older brother named Durin who is also with him on the quest for the Sword of Shannara. Dayel looks like a typical elf with a slight body, pointed ears, and pale skin. Other typical Elf traits include excellent hearing, stealth, and a quick, fast pace across the terrain.

During the quest, the reader learns Durin is extremely protective of his younger brother, feeling that Dayel deserves a chance to enjoy life and needs to survive the journey. At home, Dayel has a fiancé with whom he is planning on marrying until he is asked to help search for the sword by the Elf King. His loyalty to his family and willingness to put his own desires second displays his selflessness. The others note Durin has an open, youthful personality and acts quite young.

Dayel stays as a rock through the entire trip and during the battle at Tyrsis he stands against the Rock Trolls at the bridge. In the end he is able to return home to marry his sweetheart.

Hendel

Hendel is a dwarf, so he is short and stocky and loves to be in the open forest. He is an excellent tracker who saves Menion from a Siren even though Hendel thinks Leah is a fool for falling for the Siren's call. Hendel has very little patience for fools and appears to be a grumpy, mostly unemotional, old dwarf at the first meeting.

Later the reader discovers that Hendel has a wife and family whom he leaves to go fight the Gnomes. He tries to be efficient and not talk about his feelings, but Hendel obviously cares deeply about the four lands and his families' safety to be able to leave a happy home and frequently be in the middle of dangerous situations.

Hendel is also extremely loyal and selfless and is willing to sacrifice his life for the greater good. When the Valemens are dying and must get through the Pass of Jade, which is overrun by Gnomes, Hendel offers to be a diversion and take the attention away from the group. He does this even knowing it is unlikely he will be able to escape and hide from a large group of Gnomes.

When Balinor is captured and placed in the dungeons, Hendel bravely goes into the dark to save his friends, despite the fact he is afraid of dark, enclosed spaces. Once again, he shows his loyalty and self-sacrifice.

After his many brave acts, he dies while defending Tyrsis from a sneak attack from the opposing army. Hendel's last sacrifice helps stall the armies long enough for Shea to locate the Sword of Shannara and kill the Warlock Lord. Hendel is a hero who constantly saves people at the detriment to his own life.



Panamon Creel

Panamon Creel is a one-armed thief who rescued Shea from a band of Gnomes. He appears open and friendly but is quick to anger and a dangerous enemy. Creel appears to be over 40, but he has aged gracefully and it is difficult to guess his actual age.

He only rescues Shea because he sees the Elfstones and wants to steal them from the Gnomes. Creel says he has no interest in helping the Valeman, but he could have left Shea to die in the woods but did not, which means he is not completely self-involved.

His one companion is a mute Troll named Keltset who Creel says is his friend. Panamon Creel keeps up a brash, uncaring appearance yet he rescues Keltset and Shea in his travels. Ultimately, he helps Shea head north on the quest for the Sword of Shannara. Along the way we see a brave fighter who appears to have been scared by his past but is desperate to belong and have friends.

Keltset Mallicos

Keltset Mallicos is a huge, mute Rock Troll and an amazing fighter. Rock Trolls are rumored to be stupid, large, aggressive beasts like creatures that fight and kill without any thought to their actions. While Keltset is a mute, which makes him appear stupid, he has learned to communicate through sign language and does not follow Creel blindly. He appears to have his own motives and is actually quite intelligent.

When Keltset, Creel, and Shea face a Skull Bearer, the reader learns that Keltset has faced these creatures before and is hated by the Warlock Lord. Later we learn that Keltset's family was killed by the Warlock Lord and Keltset has sworn vengeance against Brona.

Creel and Shea are taken prisoner by the Rock Trolls and Keltset shows a trophy that proves he would never betray the Trolls, which allows him to tell the Trolls of his betrayal by Brona, who made him mute, so that he could never easily tell of the Warlock's treachery. Keltset explains Trolls are being used by the Warlock Lord and it needs to stop. He convinces them to lead Shea and Creel into the Skull Kingdom to retrieve the Sword and kill Brona.

Keltset shows a great heart and bravery despite the loss of his family and his voice. He dies helping his companions escape after Shea obtains the Sword.

Brona (Warlock Lord)

Brona is the Warlock Lord, an evil Druid that is the antagonist of the novel. When Brona was part of the Druids, he felt he was not getting the adoration and respect he deserved. Brona thought he was the most powerful Druid ever. He splits from the "good" Druids taking several other power-hungry Druids with him.



In the second Great War, Brona pitted the Gnomes and Trolls against the other races in the four lands. A famous Elven King, Jerle Shannara, led the army that fought against the Druid, his minions, and his army. Using the famous Sword of Shannara, it was believed that Brona was killed.

Instead, Brona has been quietly killing all the descendants of the Shannara line so he can once again make a play for dominion over the four lands. The Warlock Lord is delusional, quick to anger, and overconfident in his abilities. His overconfidence leads him to believe that he has killed the members of the quest and the last heir to the Shannara line. After that, he sends his armies to decimate the Southlands.

Ultimately, his delusion is what destroys Brona. The Sword of Shannara shows him that he is dead and that his belief that he is alive is just an illusion. His hatred and dark power is all that was giving him a corporal form.

Stenmin

Stenmin is an evil mystic who has the ear of Palance Buckhannah. The mystic is poisoning the King and drugging Palance to make him easy to manipulate. He works for the Warlock Lord and is attempting to prevent the people of Callahorn from fighting the armies of Brona.

Stenmin kidnaps Shirl to prevent anyone from making Palance see reason. Palance's love for his brother and Shirl give him a moment of sanity and he refuses to obey Stenmin. Realizing he had lost control of the King, Stenmin stabs Palance and flees the palace. Stenmin is manipulative, evil, and only hopes to gain the maximum amount of power. He is also persistent. Even after losing control of Palance and fleeing the palace, he still sneaks a part of Brona's armies inside. During the invasion of the palace, Stenmin's quest for power and hatred gets him killed at the hands of Menion Leah.

Palance Buckhannah

Palance Buckhannah is the younger brother of Balinor Buckhannah. As children, the brothers were extremely close and almost inseparable. As they grow older the obvious separation between trained heir to the throne and the younger brother becomes more pronounced. Palance disagrees with Balinor's ideas for Callahorn and the Border Legion.

He feels that Tyrsis should not have to defend the Southlands. Unfortunately, Palance's jealousy and difference of opinion with his brother allows Palance to be easily manipulated. The weaker aspects of his personality come to the fore and his love for his brother is squashed by the mystic Stenmin telling Palance what he wishes to hear. Palance is also drugged by Stenmin to make it easier to keep the Prince under the mystic's thumb.



His only saving grace is Palance's great love for Shirl, who was the only person he still cares about even in his drugged state. His love for Shirl and the small good portion of his personality that is left remembers his love for his brother and prevents him from killing Balinor. Palance dies because he refuses to kill those he loves, so in the end he redeems himself.

Orl Fane

Orl Fane is a Gnome who deserts the Gnome army and then loots the dead bodies of the Gnome and Elven armies. He finds the Sword of Shannara and is insane after seeing the truth about terrible aspects of his personality.

Shirl Ravenlock

Shirl Ravenlock is a princess whose family used to rule the island city of Kern and at one time even all of Callahorn. She was the great love of Palance Buckhannah and the only one to whom he would listen. Menion Leah rescues Shirl from Trolls and the two fall in love.

Eventine Elessedil

Eventine Elessedil is the current King of the Elves. He is captured by the Gnomes and rescued from the camp by Flick, which delays the Elven army from reaching Tyrsis at the beginning of the battle. Eventine has a very strong personality and rules wisely, so his people are very loyal.

King of the Silver River

The King of the Silver River is a fairy tale to the people of the four lands. He is guardian of the river and said to help travelers reach their destination. He saves Flick and Shea from a Skull Bearer and transports them to Anar.

Sheelon

Sheelon is a friend of Balinor and explains that the Border Legion is disbanded. He is put in the dungeons when he is seen talking to Balinor and escapes with the Prince. He is a captain in the Border Legion and is killed during the fight between Tyrsis and Brona's armies.

Janus Senpre

Janus Senpre is a young legion commander in the Border Legion.



Skull Bearers

Skull Bearers are the evil minions of the Druid Brona. They used to be Druids and are now evil creatures that are not at full strength in the daylight. They are huge, dark flying creatures that are scary to behold. They sound a little like a ugly looking dragon.

Ruhl Buckhannah

Ruhl Buckhannah is the King of Callahorn but is poisoned by Stenmin making his son Balinor the new King.

Breen Elesedil

Breen Elesedil is the younger brother of Eventine, the King of the Elves. When his brother is captured he looks for him because he loves his brother but also because he does not want the responsibility of being King.

Jon Lin Sandor

Jon Lin Sandor is an Elf and Eventine's friend. He and Breen search for the captured King.

Bremen

Bremen is a famous Druid who was an elder of the Druid council. He magically created the Sword of Shannara to help defeat Brona. He is the one who gave the Sword to Jerle Shannara. At the end of the book the reader learns he is Allanon's father.



Objects/Places

Shady Vale

The Vale is a peaceful, isolated location. It is the home of Shea and Flick and the location of their Father's inn.

Hall of Kings

A tomb where monarchs are buried. It is filled with poisoned treasures as well as a reptilian creature that drips venom.

Sword of Shannara

A magical sword that can kill evil by revealing the truth of its nature to the bearer and the recipient of its touch. The only people who can use the sword are the descendants of Jerle Shannara.

Northland

The home of the Warlock Lord and the Skull Bearers. The Northland is protected by a black wall containing spirits that drain the will of the living.

Southland

The home of most of the remaining humans. Humans have isolated themselves in small communities in the Southland.

Storlock

Home of a group of healer Gnomes. The water from a pool in the Storlock is the key to healing people of all races.

Sword of Leah

The ancestral sword of the monarchy of Leah that is passed down to the eldest Prince of Leah.



Skull Kingdom

The Skull Kingdom is the home of Brona and his minions and is located in the Northland.

Elfstones

Blue stones that protect Shea Ohmstead from creatures of the spirit world such as the Skull Bearers. Their one negative aspect is that they also reveal the location of the user to the spirit world.

Black Oaks

A dangerous forest that contains nasty wolves. Shea and Flick were lost in the forest because of Menion, which caused a rift in Flick and Menion's relationship.

Mist Marsh

A swamp that contains a magical Mist Wraith. The Mist Wraith is thought to be a fairy tale until Shea, Flick, and Menion encounter the magical creature in the marsh and defeat the deadly creature.

Silver River

A river outside the Black Oaks. It is said to be watched by an old man named the Silver King. The Silver King is rumored to help lost travelers find their way to their destination. Flick and Shea encounter the Silver King on their journey to Anar, and he saves them from a Skull Bearer and transports them to Anar.

Paranor

The Druid Keep where science and magic work together to protect the Sword of Shannara and the secrets of the Druids.

Highland City of Leah

Small city in the highlands and one of the few remaining monarchies; it is ruled by Menion Leah's father.



Tyrsis

The fortress city that houses the Border Legion and the Palace of the Kings of Callahorn.

Callahorn

Home of Prince Balinor and the fortress city of Tyrsis. Callahorn is the first line of defense against Brona's armies for the Southland.

Anar

The forest home of the Dwarfs.

Mermidon

The waters that surround the island city of Kern and flow into Callahorn. The water is used to evacuate the city during the fight against Brona's armies.

Kern

Island city near Tyrsis, home of Shirl Ravenlock. The city was evacuated using the waters of the Mermidon and then burned to the ground during the fight against Brona.

Lake of Hadeshorn

A lake outside the Hall of Kings that cannot be approached by mortals. The lake enables Allanon to talk to the Shade of Bremen and receive information about the success of the group's quest.

Skull Mountain

Skull Mountain is a huge mountain whose caverns are the fortress home of the Warlock Lord and the Skull Bearers. Keltset with several other good trolls lead Shea here to find the Sword of Shannara thus enabling him to defeat Brona.



Themes

Reluctant Heroism

One of the main themes of quite a few books, especially fantasy novels, is about normal people being forced into a quest to save others. Typically, this is due to circumstances around their birth or heritage. In *Sword of Shannara*, the main protagonist, Shea is the only living direct descendant of the famous King of Shannara. If Shea does not find the Sword of Shannara, his family, friends, and entire land will be destroyed.

Numerous other heroes also emerge during the course of the novel because they are helping their family or friends or because they were born and trained to help. Flick, Shea's brother, ends up saving an Elven King and being a hero to the Elven people because he wanted to help his brother. He never had any intentions of "saving the world" but wants to support and protect his family.

Menion Leah, a Prince, should epitomize heroism, but he wastes his position and life flitting impulsively around from one adventure to another, ignoring his duties to his family and city. The only reason he helps Shea is because he is one of the few people that believes in him and that Leah calls a friend. Leah spends the entire book adventuring and protecting Shea and only once Shea goes missing, does Menion reluctantly go to warn Balinor of the immediate danger to Tyrasis. Leah helps save the city and valiantly fights the attack, but that was never his intention, he just wanted to go on a fun adventure with his friend. As Leah watches his friends defend the Southland he realizes he wants to be a better man. If his friends were not so brave in defending the South, the armies would have advanced and destroyed his highland city. Leah knows he needs to be a better person and learn the wisdom he needs to be a good ruler someday.

Allanon seems to be a hero all along but we have to wonder why. It is not until the end that we learn he is Bremen's son and the last Druid besides Brona. Allanon is motivated to complete his father's last wish because he is afraid of the Warlock Lord destroying the world. He feels guilty that the Warlock Lord was not killed in his father's time so is now a reluctant hero. The seemingly unfeeling Druid even considers Shea a friend by the end. He tells Shea that the Valeman has become so much more than Allanon ever expected.

In the end, when Shea holds the Sword of Shannara, he admits the truth that he left the Vale more out of fear of the evil that was seeking to kill him, than a desire to save the people of the Vale. He even realizes he let Flick come along because he was afraid to go alone. Shea and Flick really do feel love and devotion towards each other, but when push comes to shove, especially a dangerous push, most people do tend to think of themselves first. Shea faces the truth and accepts the negative aspects of his personality, which enables him to face the evil that threatens to destroy all that he loves. Whatever Shea's reasoning to go on the quest and even though he is reluctant to undertake this journey, he ultimately accepts himself and saves his home.



Each man, Shea, Flick, and Menion start the journey for self-preservation, adventure, or love of their family. Everyone has multiple doubts about the actuality of the evil and their ability to help. Each one ends up learning that even a reluctant hero can help save the world.

Good Versus Evil

This novel has a great deal occurring in every chapter, which makes it difficult to define any one theme as being the most important. Good versus evil is important to the overall plot. In most fairy tales, there is typically a bad witch or wizard trying to kill the good hero. In this book, the evil Warlock Lord Brona thought he had killed all the descendants of the Shannara line but discovers there is one hidden heir. Brona is not sure who the successor is but sends search parties out to follow the people who may try to find the heir.

Later, Brona thinks he has succeeded in trapping and killing the people out to stop him, so he focuses his attention on conquering the world using his Gnome and Troll army. These two races are probably not always evil but because of the Master's influence they became evil to the other races in the four lands. As in any war, there are good and bad people. For example, the Stors, who are members of the Gnome race, have only one purpose in life, which is to help and heal members of any race.

There are also good Trolls, such as Keltset who help Shea enter the Skull Mountain. As it turns out, Brona manipulated the Rock Trolls by making it appear as if Dwarf looters had killed Keltset's family in a particularly nasty manner. Keltset discovers the treachery and seeks to help destroy the Warlock Lord. The reader, along with the characters, learn that most people are not fully evil and no one is perfectly pure of heart and heroic. People have their own goals and ambitions. Shea set out to selfishly protect himself by going on the quest but ends up saving the world. There is a great deal of grey area between good and evil. Most people have a redeeming quality; however, in Brona's case, the reader is never sure if and what the redemptive attribute might be.

If it had not been for the evil Warlock Lord, there would have been no need for the braveness of Shea and the others, as well as no tale.

Effects of War on a World

The effects of the Great War on the four lands is mentioned many times and even described in great detail by Allanon several times, first to Shea and Flick, and then to the entire quest group while they are in Anar, home of the Dwarfs.

The holocaust brought about many changes to the world's surface, as well as to the environment. Even though the word nuclear is not used, it is assumed by the reader since there was mutation of the planet's population. Normal fighting would not cause such devastating changes. New races appear on the planet, though there is some question as to how many races are actually new. Allanon keeps promising to tell Shea



more about the Elves but never does. Allanon's evasiveness about the Elves makes it seem as though they always existed but chose to stay hidden from mankind.

This next war is fought between the Warlock Lord and Jerle Shannara, who did not succeed in killing the Warlock. Shea only learns at the end of the book why Jerle was unable to defeat Brona. Jerle was unable to accept the full truth about himself and used the sword as a weapon instead of for its magical purpose. The first war with Jerle and Brona has another casualty, Allanon's father, the Great Druid Bremen, who died trying to guide Jerle, save the world, and destroy Brona. That war helped shape Allanon into the person and Druid that he becomes, which is reserved, seemingly unemotional, but deeply concerned about the world. Part of his interest in the current fight against Brona is to complete his father's mission. The reader has to wonder what Allanon would have been like if not for his father's sacrifice.

Many people of all races are killed in this newest war against Brona and the lives of others adversely affected by losing family members and friends. War is a great tragedy and unfortunately, as a race, human beings in the "real" world do not seem able to get along without fighting, just as in fantasy novels. It is doubtful that peace will last in the four lands of this novel.

Style

Point of View

THE SWORD OF SHANNARA is written in the third person. This enables the reader to know what each character is thinking and feeling and to see the characters change throughout the novel.

For instance, Shea goes from a quiet, isolationist to someone more involved in others' lives. He learns to accept his own weaknesses and see his own worth. This viewpoint also allows information about the past as well as the present to be understood easily, either as dialogue or as stories. Locations can be described without resorting to characters expounding about a place. Being omniscient makes it much easier to understand events such as the defense of Tyrsis. If the reader had only one person's view, the battle would not have been nearly as interesting.

One lack in the novel is the inadequate description of Brona and his minions' motives and feelings. Sure, Brona is delusional and evil but besides mentioning his lust for power and eternal life, the reader wonders why he is evil and what made him split from the Druids. Are there any other factors contributing to his downfall? More comparison and contrast between Brona and Allanon might have helped the reader understand both Druids' motives better and why one leaned towards evil and one towards good. Both appear to be equally powerful and evil can be just as enticing as good. Of course, since other novels dealing with Shannara and history prior to this book, most of those answers can probably be found in previous Shannara series books.

Much of the novel focuses on Shea's point of view and his doubts and self-reflection about himself, which does not leave much room for the reader to learn about some of the other "main" characters with whom Shea interacts. For example, the Elves are part of the quest but minus their acute hearing, scouting abilities, and seemingly pleasant personalities, depth is lacking in most characters except Shea, Flick, and Menion Leah, which are the people with whom Shea feels the most connection.

Setting

The Sword of Shannara appears to take place on a version of Earth. The humans of old used to be extremely scientific and not believe in magic or other races, such as Dwarfs and Elves. Then there was a great war that ended in a holocaust that destroyed the landscape, most knowledge of science, and altered the location and physical appearance of the surviving humans and creatures.

Now there are four main lands, Northland, Southland, Westland, and Eastland. Most humans live in the Southland, isolated from the rest of the world. The Northland is now the domain of the evil spirit creatures that used to be druids. They now serve the



Warlock Lord, an ancient Druid that is using his powers to dominate all of the lands. The Westland is the home of the Elves and the Eastland is home of the Dwarfs.

Much of the book takes place in the Southland and the Northland. The characters travel through multiple locations throughout the Southland. The last quarter of the book takes place in Tyrsis in the Southland, where Balinor defends his home against the Warlock Lord's army. In the Northland, Shea is trying to locate the Sword of Shannara in the mountain of the Skull Kingdom, home of the evil Warlock Lord.

Chapter 32 and 33 take place in the Northland where Shea finally finds the Sword of Shannara, which he uses to kill the Warlock Lord in his stronghold. Then there are earthquakes throughout the land the worst of which are located in the Skull Kingdom, which crumples to the ground so it can not be revived to be used again by evil. Finally, the quest is over and Shea and Flick go home to the Vale in the Southlands.

Language and Meaning

The language in this novel makes use of a lot of adjectives to describe both people and places. This is true from the beginning of the book until the end. This means that most chapters are quite long but the world comes alive in the reader's mind. There is a great deal of detail about scenery and the reader can visualize how people appear and what they think.

While there is at least one adventure in most chapters, the continuing quest keeps the reader wanting to know what comes next. The use of so much descriptive rhetoric is great because it makes the danger real and dramatic. Many events leave you up in the air and it can be quite a few pages before we know what befalls the character. In this regard, there might be a bit too much self-reflection on other characters' feelings, which may make the reader impatient to get back to the other event that was left hanging a number of pages back.

The description of the war in Tyrsis seems a little too involved as well. The choice of language is used with great impact, but it is a little difficult to follow the chain of events. At least on the battlefield it is easy to know that the enemy is the Gnomes, Rock Trolls, and Skull Bearers. In the city, it is harder to tell since some of Palance's people are still committing sabotage until the end of the battle.

Sometimes the same thoughts and feelings are repeated in the characters' minds in more than one place in the novel. This is especially true of Shea, who seems to always be wondering if he can trust Allanon, especially as he feels the Druid has not been totally "upfront" with the group. Shea keeps questioning people about Allanon as well as questioning his own competency. The character's thoughts can get a little tedious and the novel could have been a bit shorter without quite so much repetition.



Structure

This novel is thirty-five chapters long and has 726 pages. The chapters are of varying length but most are a minimum of nine pages. The chapters are numbered and not labeled so the reader has no idea what is going to occur in the chapter. Most chapters cover between one and three days in the life of the characters. The entire book might be considered an epic novel, all about quests, heroes, wars, and personal growth. Each chapter has a great deal of descriptive language and introspection on the part of the characters.

The plot of the novel is about ordinary people who are thrust into a quest to save the world against evil because of their family connections. The main character, Shea must search for the magical Sword of Shannara because he is the last living descendant of Jerle Shannara, a famous Elven king. Only descendants of the Elven king can wield the sword. Shea reluctantly agrees to the crusade because the evil Warlock Lord is trying to kill Shea and his family. Even though Shea does not believe he can save the world, he wants to try so he can save his family and friends. His brother Flick goes along on the quest because he loves his brother and wants to protect him from danger. Along the way the two make friends and receive help in the endeavor. Each person in the group is on the venture for one of three reasons- to protect their families and friends, at the request of a family member, or to vindicate the family name. The quest ends and the battle is won when Shea finds the Sword of Shannara and defeats the Warlock Lord because Shea realizes despite his fears and doubts he has succeeded in his goal.

There is one main subplot in the book revolving around Balinor Buckhanna, Prince of Callahorn and leader of the Border Legion. Balinor's problems with his brother Palance stall his defense of his city and end up killing his father and one of his friends. His strong family ties and love for his brother hurts other people that have been there for him. His love for his brother also puts the entire Southlands in jeopardy because his fortress city of Tyrsis is the first and last line of defense for that area against the armies of the Warlock Lord. Balinor's brother puts Balinor in the dungeons and he almost does not escape in time to fight against the armies and stall the Warlock Lord while he waits for Shea to find the Sword of Shannara.

The novel's pace is slow because a great deal of the book is about the characters wandering around the landscape getting into constant trouble, learning about themselves, and discovering that fairy tales are real. The self-reflection of the characters becomes a bit tedious as does the multiple locations that they travel through that ultimately serve no purpose except as filler. Overall though the novel is entertaining, but it might take some people a while to get through the entire book.



Quotes

"The deep silence was unsettling, particularly in view of the rumors of a frightening black-winged creature sighted in the night skies north of the valley only days earlier." Chap. 1, The Sword of Shannara, p. 2

"I have no idea what you're talking about, but Shea and I are brothers and what happens to one must happen to both." Chap. 2, The Sword of Shannara, p. 30

"I have placed a small pouch which contains three Elfstones. They will provide you with guidance and protection when nothing else can. Be cautioned - they are for Shea alone and to be used only when all else fails." Chap. 3, The Sword of Shannara, p. 44

"He had to admit Menion Leah would be a good man to have around in a fight, but at the same time he was not sure whose side the unpredictable fellow would decide to take." Chap. 4, The Sword of Shannara, p. 71

"In the silent darkness Shea Ohmsford is alone with his fear, and deep within himself, he fought back against a rising knot of terror." Chap 5, The Sword of Shannara, p. 86

"The strangeness of the situation increased almost immediately as he glanced up to see the strange root-limbed tree, previously immobile, approaching in a slow, stretching motion, its limbs extended toward him, their tips containing small but deadly looking needles." Chap 7, The Sword of Shannara, p. 126

"My special skill appears to be that I was born in the wrong family, but I had better see this matter through." Chap 8, The Sword of Shannara, p. 146

"The initial force did most of the damage, killing every living thing over ninety percent of the face of the earth, but the aftereffects carried on the alteration and extinction, breaking the continents apart, drying up oceans, making lands and seas uninhabitable for several hundred years." Chap 9, The Sword of Shannara, p. 155

"If there were an expert bowman in the group-' Flick shot Menion a venomous look '-he might be able to put an arrow with a line into the wood fragments of the bridge hanging on the other side and pull it back to this side.'" Chap 10, The Sword of Shannara, p. 184

"Bred by the men of another time to serve the needs of masters, it had survived the holocaust that had destroyed them, but in surviving and in preserving its centuries-old existence with bits of metal grafted to its decaying form, it had evolved into a misshapen freak-and worse, an eater of flesh." Chap 11, The Sword of Shannara, p. 197

"In the next instant, while the astonished Gnome and his still- mystified followers were caught momentarily frozen with uncertainly, the second arrow embedded itself painfully in the half-turned and highly vulnerable posterior of the chieftain, who gave an agonizing howl that could be heard the length and breadth of the firelit Pass of Jade." Chap 12, The Sword of Shannara, p. 216



"Balinor came out of the shadows to the rear of the newcomer in time to see an elated Menion leap into the air with a wild shout and charge down to embrace the smaller, stockier figure with unrestrained joy." Chap 13, The Sword of Shannara, p. 248.

"Necessity was a higher god than truth." Chap 14, The Sword of Shannara, p. 253

"Fool, you are less a prince and more a clown to speak like this!" Allanon raged, his face tightening into a mask of anger, the great hands balling into fists and clenching before him." Chap 15, The Sword of Shannara, p. 275

"The faint but unmistakable sound of muffled laughter echoed brokenly off the chill walls in long peals, mocking their foolishness and their bitter inevitable defeat." Chap 16, The Sword of Shannara, p. 314

"In this cavernous room, its walls wet with the cold that cut knifelike through the rock, scurried the inky minions of the Warlock Lord." Chap 17, The Sword of Shannara, p. 316

"Panamon Creel watched him approach in astonishment, certain that the Valeman was crazed to the point of daring to attack them to regain possession of the three blue gems." Chap 18, The Sword of Shannara p. 342

"Shea was convinced the clever Panamon Creel would merely toy with him, give him enough rope to find out how he planned to get the stones, and then gaily haul in the noose about the Valeman's neck." Chap 19, The Sword of Shannara, p. 346

"They were poor looking weapons, though he rather fancied the slim broad sword with the extended arm and burning torch cut into the hilt." Chap 20, The Sword of Shannara, p. 376

"He would give them the power they needed to withstand the sun-the power he had harnessed in the great dark wall that shadowed his kingdom and would soon begin to shadow all of the lands beyond. The days of light were drawing to a close." Chap 21, The Sword of Shannara, p. 401

"'That is what makes him so dangerous,' the Dwarf declared, standing before the tall borderman, meeting his gaze squarely. 'He no longer loves you.'" Chap 22, The Sword of Shannara, p. 416

"A small, dark beard covered the thin, shallow face of the stranger, and he had a peculiar habit of stroking the little beard in short, nervous pats while he talked." Chap 23, The Sword of Shannara, p. 450

"Those few men of the fabled Border legion had so utterly disrupted the enemy camp that even now, some four hours after the initial strike, the confusion was still continuing." Chap 24, The Sword of Shannara, p. 478



"That terrible memory had imbedded itself in generations of Dwarfs, leaving them with an instinctive fear of unlighted, confined places that they would never completely overcome." Chap 25, The Sword of Shannara, p. 503

"Panamon led them into the rocks, ignoring Shea's repeated threats and pleas as he searched for shelter on the east slope of the hill, away from the force of the wind and rain." Chap 26, The Sword of Shannara, p. 527

"Flick had changed considerably since his first meeting with Allanon weeks earlier in Shady Vale, developing an inner strength and maturity and a confidence in himself he had never believed himself capable of sustaining. But the past twenty-four hours had proved a supreme test of raw courage and perseverance that even a seasoned border fighter like Handel would have found frightening." Chap 27, The Sword of Shannara p. 541

"Pausing momentarily to gag Stenmin in the event the evil adviser should attempt to call out another warning to the guards posted outside the cellar door, the highlander told of rescuing Shirl Ravenlock, fleeing to Kern and subsequently to the walls of Tyrsis after the island city was besieged and destroyed." Chap 28, The Sword of Shannara, p. 578

"How could evil such as the Warlock Lord be destroyed when it could not be understood? Only Allanon seemed fully to appreciate the nature of the creature." Chap 29, The Sword of Shannara, p.606

"The story of the Dwarf looters was a deception to inflame the Troll citizenry to join in the Southland invasion." Chap 30, The Sword of Shannara, p. 630

"Woodenly he moved to the fallen Orl Fane and bent over him, his fingers closing firmly around the cold metal hilt of the weapon, feeling the raised image of the burning torch in his sweating palm. He paused. Then slowly he drew forth the Sword of Shannara." Chap 331, The Sword of Shannara, p. 657

"He walked aimlessly, his eyes shockingly blank, his face stricken with a terrible stunned look that screamed in silent agony for release." Chap 32, The Sword of Shannara, p. 682

"But now the Sword was forcing him to behold himself as he really was - a decayed, lifeless shell sustained only by a misconceived belief in his own reality - a sham, a fantasy created by force of will alone, an ephemeral as the physical being he had made himself appear." Chap. 33, The Sword of Shannara, p. 702

"You had to learn to accept the truth about yourself first before the Sword could be of any use to you as a Talisman against the Warlock Lord." Chap 34, The Sword of Shannara, p. 715

"Herein lies the heart and soul of the nations.
Their right to be free men,
Their desire to live in peace,

Their courage to seek out the truth.
Herein lies the Sword of Shannara." Chap 35, The Sword of Shannara, p. 723

Topics for Discussion

What traits make up a hero? Who are the heroes in this book and why? Who are the reluctant heroes in this book and why? Compare and contrast heroes and reluctant heroes.

What family member influences each member of the group to join the quest and how did the family member influence them? Do you think each member originally joined the quest because of their family? If not, who joined mostly for another reason? If so, why is that such a huge motivating factor versus just doing the right thing?

What effect does war have on the four lands? What is the difference between the war that occurred during the time of science and the time of magic? Do you think one type of war is better than another? Why or Why not?

Why do you think that truth was the Sword's power? What made seeing the truth the most powerful weapon in the four lands? What enabled some people to be able to handle the truth and others to go insane or die as a result of their own self-reflection? Do you think everyone lies to themselves? Why is lying to oneself good and/or bad?

Some of the people in the four lands are ruled by monarchies and some by the more democratic councils. What are the benefits to having monarchies? What are the benefits to having councils? Why do you think that the new world reverted to some monarchies? Is the current state of the four lands better served by monarchies or councils? Why or why not?

In the past the elves isolated themselves in the Westlands and had little contact with the other races. In the current setting, humans have isolated themselves in the Southlands. Why does this isolation hurt the elves? Why does this isolation hurt the humans? Does any good come from isolating yourselves from the world? Why or why not?

Why are Trolls and Gnomes the minions of the Warlock Lord in the novel? Do you think their non-acceptance by the other races causes their service to the Warlock Lord? Are they inherently evil or is that perception by others' what keeps them "evil"? Do you think looks play a part in how a race is perceived? Why or why not?

How has the land changed since the last war? How does the land change after the current war? How does it show signs of hope and a new beginning?