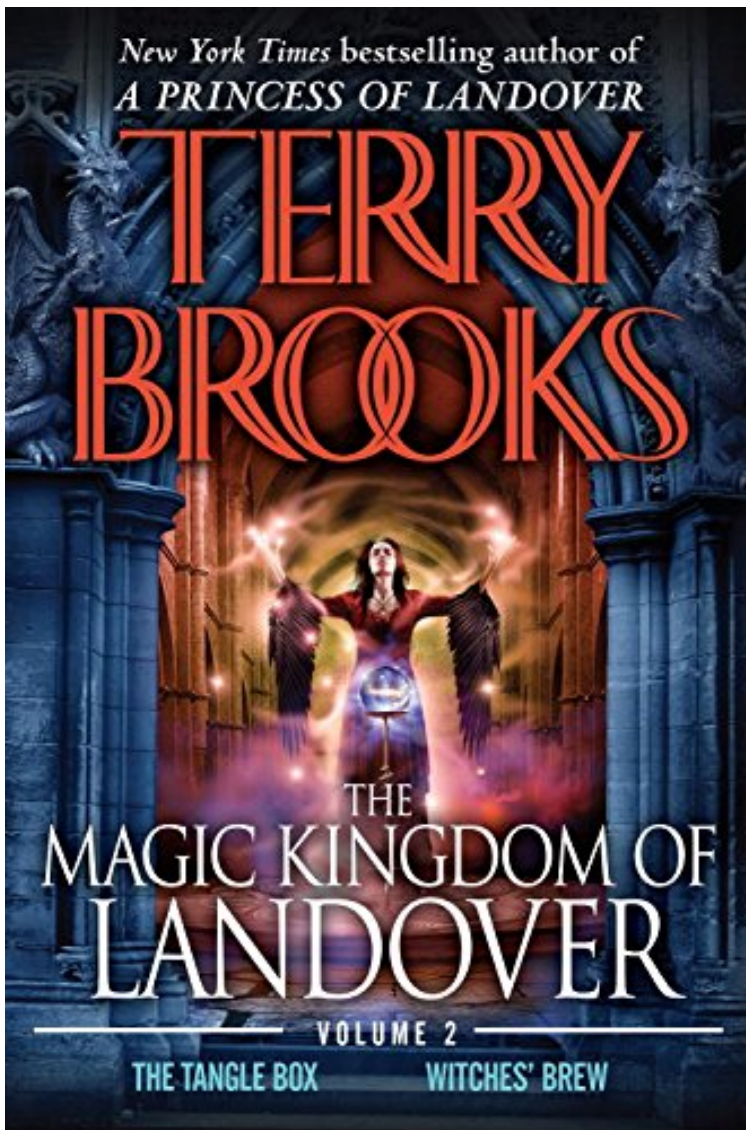


(Read ebook) File size: 23.Mb

The Magic Kingdom of Landover Volume 2



Par Terry Brooks
*ePub / *DOC / audiobook / ebooks /*
Download PDF

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #516715 dans eBooksPubli le: 2009-08-13Sorti le: 2009-08-18Format: Ebook Kindle

(Read ebook) The Magic Kingdom of Landover Volume 2

Par Terry Brooks : The Magic Kingdom of Landover Volume 2 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Magic Kingdom of Landover Volume 2:

Download

Read Online

Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurNow in one thrilling volumeexperience the magic, the intrigue, and the exciting escapades of the final two novels in Terry Brookss spellbinding Magic Kingdom of Landover series All appears well with Ben Holiday. Hes finally secured for himself the throne of Landover, and he and his wife, the exquisite sylph Willow, are expecting their first child. But their peaceful days are numbered. The conjurer Horris Kews returns to Landover and inadvertently releases an evil sorcerer from the Tangle Box, a magic chest used by the fairy folk to imprison wayward spirits. Now free, the sorcerer traps Ben inside the boxes labyrinthine passages and plots to wreak havoc in Landover using Horris as his pawn. But Bens greatest challenge comes when Rydall, a foreign king, issues Ben an ultimatum: defeat seven deadly champions, or Rydalls armies invade Landover. Complicating matters is the devastating fact that Ben and

Willow's young daughter has been kidnapped and her fate lies in Rydall's dangerous hands. Relying on his loyal friends, his steadfast wife, and no small amount of endurance and enchantment, Ben risks his life to save everything he loves. But this time, black magic may prove too powerful for even the most devoted heart. From the Trade Paperback edition. Extrait Skat Mandu Horris Kew might have been a Disney artist's rendering of Ichabod Crane. He was tall and gawky and had the look of a badly assembled puppet. His head was too small, his arms and legs too long, and his ears, nose, Adam's apple, and hair stuck out all over the place. He looked harmless and silly, but he wasn't. He was one of those men who possess a little bit of power and handle it badly. He believed himself clever and wise and was neither. He was the proverbial snowball who always managed to turn himself into an avalanche. As a result, he was a danger to everyone, himself included, and most of the time he wasn't even aware of it. This morning was no exception. He came up the garden walk to the swinging gate without slowing, closing the distance in huge, loping strides, slammed the gate back as if annoyed that it had not opened of its own accord, and continued on toward the manor house.

He looked neither left nor right at the profusion of summertime flowers that were blooming in their meticulously raked beds, on the carefully pruned bushes, and along the newly painted trellises. He did not bother to breathe in the fragrant smells that filled the warm upstate New York morning air. He failed to give a moment's notice to the pair of robins singing on the low branches of the old shagbark hickory centered on the sweeping lawn leading up to the manor house. Ignoring all, he galloped along with the single-mindedness of a charging rhino. From the Assembly Hall at the base of the slope below the manor house came the sound of voices rising up like an angry swarm of bees. Horris's thick eyebrows furrowed darkly over his narrow, hooked nose, a pair of fuzzy caterpillars laboriously working their way toward a meeting. Biggar was still trying to reason with the faithful, he supposed. Trying to reason with the once-faithful, he amended. It wouldn't work, of course. Nothing would now. That was the trouble with confessions. Once given, you couldn't take them back. Simple logic, the lesson a thousand charlatans had been taught at the cost of their lives, and Biggar had somehow missed it. Horris gritted his teeth. What had that idiot been thinking? He closed on the manor house with furious determination, the shouts from the Assembly Hall chasing after him, elevated suddenly to a frightening new pitch. They would be coming soon. The whole bunch of them, the faithful of so many months become a horde of unreasoning ingrates who would rip him limb from limb if they got their hands on him. Horris stopped abruptly at the foot of the steps leading up to the veranda that ran the entire length of the gleaming home and thought about what he was losing. His narrow shoulders sagged, his disjointed body slumped, and his Adam's apple bobbed like a cork in water as he swallowed his disappointment. Five years of work gone. Gone in an instant's time. Gone like the light of a candle snuffed. He could not believe it. He had worked so hard. He shook his head and sighed. Well, there were other fish in the ocean, he supposed. And other oceans to fish. He clumped up the steps, his size-sixteens slapping against the wooden risers like clown shoes. He was looking around now-looking, because this was the last chance he would get. He would never see this house again, this colonial treasure he had come to love so much, this wonderful, old, Revolutionary American mansion, so carefully restored, so lovingly refurbished, just for him. Fallen into ruin on land given over to hunting and snow sports deep in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York, not fifty miles off the toll road linking Utica and Syracuse, it had been all but forgotten until Horris had rediscovered it. Horris had a sense of the importance of history and he admired and coveted things historical-especially when yesterday and today could be tied together for his personal gain. Skat Mandu had allowed him to combine the two, making the history of this house and land a nice, neat package tied up at Horris's feet waiting to be opened. But now Skat Mandu was history himself. Horris stopped a second time at the door, seething. All because of Biggar. He was going to lose it all because of Biggar and his big mouth. It was inconceivable. The fifty acres that formed the retreat, the manor house, the guest house, the Assembly Hall, the tennis courts, the stables, horses, attendants, cars, private plane, bank accounts, everything. He wouldn't be able to salvage any of it. It was all in the foundation's name, the tax-sheltered Skat Mandu Foundation, and he couldn't get to any of it in time. The trustees would see to that quick enough once they learned what had happened. Sure, there was the money in the Swiss bank accounts, but that wouldn't make up for the collapse of his empire. Other fish in the ocean, he repeated silently-but why did he have to go fishing again, for pity's sake? He kicked at the wicker chair next to the door and sent it flying, wishing with all his heart that he could do the same to Biggar. The shouts rose anew from the Assembly, and there was a very clear and unmistakable cry of "Let's get him!" Horris quit thinking about what might have been and went quickly inside. He was barely inside the house when he heard the beating of wings behind him. He tried to slam the door, but Biggar was too quick. He streaked through at top speed,

wings flapping wildly, a few feathers falling away as he reached the banister of the stairway that curved upward from the foyer to the second floor and settled down with a low whistle. Horris stared at the bird in bleak appraisal. "What's the trouble, Biggar? Couldn't get them to listen?" Biggar fluffed his feathers and shook himself. He was coal black except for a crown of white feathers. Quite a handsome bird, actually. A myna of some sort, though Horris had never been able to determine his exact lineage. He regarded Horris now with a wicked, gleaming eye and winked. "Awk! Pretty Horris. Pretty Horris. Biggar is better. Biggar is better." Horris pressed his fingers to his temples. "Please. Could we forgo the dumb-bird routine?" Biggar snapped his beak shut. "Horris, this is all your fault." "My fault?" Horris was aghast. He came forward threateningly. "How could this be my fault, you idiot? I'm not the one who opened his big mouth about Skat Mandu! I'm not the one who decided to tell all!" Biggar flew up the banister a few steps to keep some distance between them. "Temper, temper. Let us remember something here, shall we? This was all your idea, right? Am I right? Does this ring a bell? You thought up this Skat Mandu business, not me. I went along with the program because you said it would work. I was your pawn, as I have been the pawn of humans and humankind all my life. A poor, simple bird, an outcast..." "An idiot!" Horris edged closer, trying unsuccessfully to stop the clenching of his hands as he imagined them closing about the bird's scruffy neck. Biggar scooted a bit farther up the railing. "A victim, Horris Kew. I am the product of you and your kind. I did the best I could, but I can hardly be held to account for my actions based on your level of expectations, now can I?" Horris stopped at the foot of the stairs. "Just tell me why you did it. Just tell me that." Biggar puffed out his chest. "I had a revelation." Horris stared. "You had a revelation," he repeated dully. He shook his head. "Do you realize how ridiculous that sounds?" "I see nothing ridiculous about it at all. I am in the business of revelations, am I not?" Horris threw up his hands and turned away. "I do not believe this!" He turned back again furiously. His scarecrow frame seemed to fly out in half-a-dozen directions at once as he gestured. "You've ruined us, you stupid bird! Five years of work out the window! Five years! Skat Mandu was the foundation of everything we've built! Without him, it's gone, all of it! What were you thinking?" "Skat Mandu spoke to me," Biggar said, huffy himself now. "There is no Skat Mandu!" Horris shrieked. "Yes, there is." Horris's broad ears flamed and his even broader nostrils dilated. "Think about what you're saying, Biggar," he hissed. "Skat Mandu is a twenty-thousand-year-old wise man that you and I made up in order to convince a bunch of fools to part with their money. Remember? Remember the plan? We thought it up, you and I. Skat Mandu—a twenty-thousand-year-old wise man who had counseled philosophers and leaders throughout time. And now he was back to share his wisdom with us. That was the plan. We bought this land and restored this house and created this retreat for the faithful—the poor, disillusioned faithful—the pathetic, desperate, but well-heeled faithful who just wanted to hear somebody tell them what they already knew! That's what Skat Mandu did! Through you, Biggar. You were the channeler, a simple bird. I was the handler, the manager of Skat Mandu's holdings in the temporal world." He caught his breath. "But, Biggar, there is no Skat Mandu! Not really, not now, not ever! There's just you and me!" "I spoke to him," Biggar insisted. "You spoke to him?" Biggar gave him an impatient look. "You are repeating me. Who is the bird here, Horris?" Horris gritted his teeth. "You spoke to him? You spoke to Skat Mandu? You spoke to someone who doesn't exist? Mind telling me what he had to say? Mind sharing his wisdom with me?" "Don't be snide." Biggar's claws dug into the banister's polished wood. "Biggar, just tell me what he had to say." Horris's voice sounded like fingernails scratching on a chalkboard. "He told me to tell the truth. He told me to admit that you had made it all up about him and me, but that now I really was in contact with him." Horris's fingers locked in front of him. "Let me get this straight. Skat Mandu told you to confess?" "He said that the faithful would understand." "And you believed him?" "I had to do what Skat Mandu required of me. I don't expect you to understand, Horris. It was a matter of conscience. Sometimes you've simply got to respond on an emotional level." "You've short-circuited, Biggar," Horris declared. "You've burnt out all your wiring." "And you simply don't want to face reality," Biggar snapped. "So save your caustic comments, Horris, for those who need them." "Skat Mandu was the perfect scam!" Horris screamed the words so loudly that Biggar jumped in spite of himself. "Look around you, you idiot! We landed in a world where people are convinced they've lost control of their lives, where there's so much happening that it's overwhelming, where beliefs are the hardest things to come by and money's the easiest! It's a world tailor-made for someone like us, just packed full of opportunities to get rich, to live well, to have everything we ever wanted and a few we didn't! All we had to do was keep the illusion of Skat Mandu alive. And that meant keeping the faithful convinced that the illusion was real! How many followers do we have, Biggar? Excuse me, how many did we have? Several hundred thousand, at least? Scattered all over the world, but making regular pilgrimages to

visit the retreat, to listen to a few precious words of wisdom, to pay good money for the experience?" He took a deep breath. "Did you think for one minute that telling these people that we tricked them into giving money to hear what a bird would tell them-never mind who the bird said he was getting the words from-would be something they would be quick to forgive? Did you imagine that they would say, 'Oh, that's all right, Biggar, we understand,' and go back to wherever they came from in the first place? What a joke! Skat Mandu must be laughing pretty hard just about now, don't you think?" Biggar shook his white-crested head. "He is displeased at the lack of respect he is being accorded, is what he is." Horris's mouth tightened. "Please tell him for me, Biggar, that I could care less!" "Why don't you tell him yourself, Horris?" "What?" Biggar had a wicked gleam in his eye. "Tell him yourself. He's standing right behind you." Horris sniggered. "You've lost your mind, Biggar. You really have." "Is that so? Is that a fact?" Biggar puffed out his chest. "Then have a look, Horris. Go on, have a look." Horris felt a chill climb up his spine. Biggar sounded awfully sure of himself. The big house suddenly felt much larger than it really was, and the silence that settled into it was immense. The riotous cries of the approaching mob disappeared as if swallowed whole. It seemed to Horris that he could sense a dark presence lifting out of the ether behind him, a shadowy form that coalesced and then whispered with sullen insistence, Turn around, Horris, turn around! Horris took a deep breath in an effort to stop shaking. He had the sinking feeling that somehow, once again, things were getting out of control. He shook his head stubbornly. "I won't look," he snapped-and then added maliciously, "you stupid bird!" Biggar cocked his head. "He's reeeeeeaching for you," the myna hissed. Something feather-light brushed Horris Kew's shoulder, and he whirled about in terror. There was nothing there. Or almost nothing. There was a faint something, a darkening of the light, a small waver of movement, a hint of a stirring in the air. Horris blinked. No, not even that, he amended with satisfaction. Nothing. Outside, shouting rose up suddenly from the edge of the gardens. Horris turned. The faithful had caught sight of him through the open door and were trampling through the bedding plants and rosebushes and heading for the gate. They carried sharp objects and were making threatening gestures with them. Horris walked quickly to the door, closed and locked it, and turned back to Biggar. "That's it for you," he said. "Good-bye and good luck." He walked quickly through the foyer and down the hall past a parlor and a library sitting room to the kitchen at the back of the house. He could smell fresh wax on the pegged oak floors, and on the kitchen table sat a vase of scarlet roses. He took in the smells and colors as he passed, thinking of better times, regretting how quickly life changed when you least expected it. It was a good thing he was flexible, he decided. It was fortunate that he had foresight. "Where are we going?" Biggar asked, flying up next to him, curious enough to risk a possible blow. "I assume you have a plan." Presentation de l'diteurNow in one thrilling volumeexperience the magic, the intrigue, and the exciting escapades of the final two novels in Terry Brookss spellbinding Magic Kingdom of Landover series All appears well with Ben Holiday. Hes finally secured for himself the throne of Landover, and he and his wife, the exquisite sylph Willow, are expecting their first child. But their peaceful days are numbered. The conjurer Horris Kews returns to Landover and inadvertently releases an evil sorcerer from the Tangle Box, a magic chest used by the fairy folk to imprison wayward spirits. Now free, the sorcerer traps Ben inside the boxs labyrinthine passages and plots to wreak havoc in Landover using Horris as his pawn. But Bens greatest challenge comes when Rydall, a foreign king, issues Ben an ultimatum: defeat seven deadly champions, or Rydalls armies invade Landover. Complicating matters is the devastating fact that Ben and Willow s young daughter has been kidnappedand her fate lies in Rydalls dangerous hands. Relying on his loyal friends, his steadfast wife, and no small amount of endurance and enchantment, Ben risks his life to save everything he loves. But this time, black magic may prove too powerful for even the most devoted heart.From the Trade Paperback edition.