



## The Magic Kingdom of Landover Volume 1: Magic Kingdom For Sale SOLD! - The Black Unicorn - Wizard at Large (Magic Kingdom of Landover Bundle)

By Terry Brooks

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Capture the fantasy, thrills, and far-flung adventure of the first three novels in Terry Brooks's enchanting Magic Kingdom of Landover series—now for the first time in one gripping volume.

Chicago lawyer Ben Holiday can't fathom what lies ahead when he purchases Landover—a magical kingdom of chivalry and sorcery—from Meeks, the mysterious seller who placed the ad. Weary and jaded, Ben clings to the ad's promise: "Escape into your dreams." But Landover is not the enchanted idyll he expected.

The kingdom is in ruin. The barons refuse to recognize Ben as King, a dragon is decimating the countryside, and a demon lord has challenged any prospective ruler to a fatal duel. To make matters worse, the Paladin, renowned champion of the Kings of Landover, seems to be merely a legend.

Ben's only allies are a bumbling court magician, a talking dog turned court scribe, and the beautiful Willow, who is part girl, part tree. With his friends in tow, Ben sets out to claim the throne. But when Meeks decides he wants Landover back, Ben will face supernatural foes of every stripe to prove himself worthy of the kingship. The question is: Can he survive?

*From the Trade Paperback edition.*

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- Sales Rank: #80175 in eBooks
- Published on: 2009-08-12
- Released on: 2009-08-18
- Format: Kindle eBook

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### Editorial Review

#### About the Author

Terry Brooks is the New York Times bestselling author of more than twenty-five books, including the Genesis of Shannara novels **Armageddon's Children** and **The Elves of Cintra; The Sword of Shannara**; the Voyage of the Jerle Shannara trilogy: **Ilse Witch**, **Antrax**, and **Morgawr**; the High Druid of Shannara trilogy: **Jarka Ruus**, **Tanequil**, and **Straken**; the nonfiction book **Sometimes the Magic Works: Lessons from a Writing Life**; and the novel based upon the screenplay and story by George Lucas, *Star Wars®: Episode I The Phantom Menace*.™ His novels **Running with the Demon** and **A Knight of the Word** were selected by the *Rocky Mountain News* as two of the best science fiction/fantasy novels of the twentieth century. The author was a practicing attorney for many years but now writes full-time. He lives with his wife, Judine, in the Pacific Northwest.

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*Ben*

The catalogue was from Rosen's, Ltd. It was the department store's annual Christmas Wishbook.

It was addressed to Annie.

Ben Holiday stood frozen before the open cubicle of his mailbox, eyes slipping across the gaily decorated cover of the catalogue to the white address label and the name of his dead wife. The lobby of the Chicago high rise seemed oddly still in the graying dusk of the late afternoon rush hour, empty of everyone but the security guard and himself. Outside, past the line of floor-to-ceiling windows that fronted the building entry, the autumn wind blew in chill gusts down the canyon of Michigan Avenue and whispered of winter's coming.

He ran his thumb over the smooth surface of the Wishbook. Annie had loved to shop, even when the shopping had only been through the mail-order catalogues. Rosen's had been one of her favorite stores.

Sudden tears filled his eyes. He hadn't gotten over losing her, even after two years. Sometimes it seemed to him that losing her was nothing more than a trick of his imagination—that when he came home she would still be there waiting for him.

He took a deep breath, fighting back against the emotions that were aroused in him simply by seeing her name on that catalogue cover. It was silly to feel like this. Nothing could bring her back to him. Nothing could change what had happened.

His eyes lifted to stare into the dark square of the now-empty mailbox. He remembered what it had been like when he had first learned that she had been killed. He had just returned from court, a pre-trial on the Microlab case with old Wilson Frink and his sons. Ben was in his office, thinking of ways to persuade his opposition, a lawyer named Bates, that his latest offer of settlement would serve everyone's best interests, when the call had come in. Annie had been in an accident on the Kennedy. She was at St. Jude's in critical condition. Could he come right over . . . ?

He shook his head. He could still hear the voice of the doctor telling him what had happened. The voice had sounded so calm and rational. He had known at once that Annie was dying. He had known instantly. By the time he had gotten to the hospital, she was dead. The baby was dead, too. Annie had been only three months pregnant.

“Mr. Holiday?”

He looked about sharply, startled by the voice. George, the security guard, was looking over at him from behind the lobby desk.

“Everything all right, sir?”

He nodded and forced a quick smile. “Yes—just thinking about something.” He closed the mailbox door, shoved everything he had taken from it save the catalogue into one coat pocket and, still gripping the Wishbook in both hands, moved to the ground-floor elevators. He didn’t care for being caught off balance like that. Maybe it was the lawyer in him.

“Cold day out there,” George offered, glancing out into the gray. “Going to be a tough winter. Lot of snow, they say. Like it was a couple of years ago.” “Looks that way.” Ben barely heard him as he glanced down again at the catalogue. Annie always enjoyed the Christmas Wishbook. She used to read him promos from some of its more bizarre items. She used to make up stories about the kind of people who might purchase such things.

He pushed the elevator call button and the doors opened immediately. “Have a nice evening, sir,” George called after him.

He rode the elevator to his penthouse suite, shucked off his topcoat, and walked into the front room, still clutching the catalogue. Shadows draped the furnishings and dappled the carpeting and walls, but he left the lights off and stood motionless before the bank of windows that looked out over the sunroof and the buildings of the city beyond. Lights glimmered through the evening gray, distant and solitary, each a source of life separate and apart from the thousands of others.

We are so much of the time alone, he thought. Wasn’t it strange?

He looked down again at the catalogue. Why do you suppose they had sent it to Annie? Why were companies always sending mailers and flyers and free samples and God-knew-what-all to people long after they were dead and buried? It was an intrusion on their privacy. It was an affront. Didn’t these companies update their mailing lists? Or was it simply that they refused ever to give up on a customer?

He checked his anger and, instead, smiled, bitter, ironic. Maybe he should phone it all in to Andy Rooney. Let him write about it.

He turned on the lights then and walked over to the wall bar to make himself a scotch, Glenlivet on the rocks with a splash of water; he measured it out and sipped at it experimentally. There was a bar meeting in a little less than two hours, and he had promised Miles that he would make this one. Miles Bennett was not only his partner, but he was probably his only real friend since Annie’s death. All of the others had drifted away somehow, lost in the shufflings and rearrangings of life’s social order. Couples and singles made a poor mix, and most of their friends had been couples. He hadn’t done much to foster continuing friendships in any case, spending most of his time involved with his work and with his private, inviolate grief. He was not

such good company anymore, and only Miles had had the patience and the perseverance to stay with him.

He drank some more of the scotch and wandered back again to the open windows. The lights of the city winked back at him. Being alone wasn't so bad, he reasoned. That was just the way of things. He frowned. Well, that was his way, in any case. It was his choice to be alone. He could have found companionship again from any one of a number of sources; he could have reintegrated himself into almost any of the city's myriad social circles. He had the necessary attributes. He was young still and successful; he was even wealthy, if money counted for anything—and in this world it almost always did. No, he didn't have to be alone.

And yet he did, because the problem was that he really didn't belong anyway. He thought about that for a moment—forced himself to think about it. It wasn't simply his choosing to be alone that kept him that way; it was almost a condition of his existence. The feeling that he was an outsider had always been there. Becoming a lawyer had helped him deal with that feeling, giving him a place in life, giving him a ground upon which he might firmly stand. But the sense of not belonging had persisted, however diminished its intensity—a nagging certainty. Losing Annie had simply given it new life, emphasizing the transiency of any ties that bound him to whom and what he had let himself become. He often wondered if others felt as he did. He supposed they must; he supposed that to some extent everyone felt something of the same displacement. But not as strongly as he, he suspected. Never that strongly.

He knew Miles understood something of it—or at least something of Ben's sense of it. Miles didn't feel about it as Ben did, of course. Miles was the quintessential people person, always at home with others, always comfortable with his surroundings. He wanted Ben to be that way; he wanted to bring him out of that self-imposed shell and back into the mainstream of life. He viewed his friend as some sort of challenge in that regard. That was why Miles was so persistent about these damn bar meetings. That was why he kept after Ben to forget about Annie and get on with his life.

He finished the scotch and made himself another. He was drinking a lot lately, he knew—maybe more than was good for him. He glanced down at his watch. Forty-five minutes had gone by. Another forty-five and Miles would be there, his chaperone for the evening. He shook his head distastefully. Miles didn't understand nearly as much as he thought he did about some things. Carrying his drink, he walked back across the room to the windows, stared out a moment, and turned away, closing the drapes against the night. He moved back to the couch, debating on whether to check the answerphone, and saw the catalogue again. He must have put it down without realizing it. It was lying with the other mail on the coffee table in front of the sectional sofa, its glossy cover reflecting sharply in the lamplight.

Rosen's, Ltd.—Christmas Wishbook.

He sat down slowly in front of it and picked it up. A Christmas catalogue of wishes and dreams—he had seen the kind before. An annual release from a department store that ostensibly offered something for everyone, this particular catalogue was for the select few only—the wealthy few.

Annie had always liked it, though.

Slowly, he began to page through it. The offerings jumped out at him, a collection of gifts for the hard-to-please, an assortment of oddities that were essentially one-of-a-kind and could be found nowhere but in the Wishbook. Dinner for two in the private California home of a famous movie star, transportation included. A ten-day cruise for sixty on a yacht, fully crewed and catered to order. A week on a privately owned Caribbean island, including the use of wine cellar and fully stocked larder. A bottle of one...

## **Users Review**

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