



Master of the Grove | The Hunting of Shadroth | Forbidden Paths of Thual

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Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

0

Boy hero in an indistinct, yet ancient-sounding age embarks on a quest for the impossible and en-route develops his own understanding of the mysteries of his existence and by herculean perseverance overcomes the dark forces ranged against him and his kind, thereby ensuring the triumphs of good over evil.

The Master of the Grove, the Australian Children's Book winner for 1983 tells the fairly complex tale of Derin, who, accompanied by a misanthropic seeming witch and an eerie raven blunders across a wide landscape attempting to comprehend the mysterious forces that are working against the peace and for the powers of Evil, personified in Krol, the usurping Master of the Grove. The plot moves briskly and eventually requiring quite considerable concentration to grasp its twists, turns and intricacies.

In The Hunting of Shadroth the hero is Tal, this time facing a less tangible adversary, the Shadroth, a black, wraithlike mist out for revenge since the theft of a magic token from its cave by the clan's young, headstrong chieftain. On this occasion the boy's animal companion is a Feln, a giant lion, and his girl assistant is the chieftain's sister. The odds are stacked against Tall from the onset and problems that he must solve often overwhelming, but triumph he does and virtue, plus a dash of his own supernatural gift, brings its reward.

Forbidden Paths of Thual is as competently, fluently written as the others and involves Quen, who must save his village from the hideously deformed Mollag by attempting the impossible and seeking the dangerously powerful Eye of Desire, employing it to destroy the enemy. This time his animal familiars are a fox and a bear and the last chapter reward is to become a woodsman in the very forest where he adventured so notably.

All of these books are attractively packaged and likely to appeal to fantasy loving lower-mid secondary pupils. Probably those already switched on to Susan Cooper or selected Diana Wynne-Jones.

Running Order:

10

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