

HELENA OKOMSKI

SHALKO
PRINCE OF THE OKIS

Beginning of the Journey

A FANTASTIC SAGA

CONTENTS

A brief introduction. . .
The hero. . .

FIRST BOOK

Chapter I
Okizar. . .

Chapter II
Haghedisse. . .

Chapter III
The South Sword is hidden between light and shadows. . .

Chapter IV
Cnu, the leprechaun. . .

Chapter V
Return Home. . .

Chapter VI
The Abda. . .

Chapter VII
The hazel wand. . .

Chapter VIII
Midwin, Lord of the South Gate, and Shalko, his disciple. . .

Chapter IX
Claymore, the Great Warrior. . .

Chapter X
Sora, Priestess of Atlantis. . .

Chapter XI
Meeting at the hill. . .

Chapter XII
The Great East Gate. . .

Chapter XIII
Scáthach is to the right of Midwin. . .

Chapter XIV
The departure. . .

Chapter XV
Menhir Valley. . .

Chapter XVI
Strange awakening. . .

Chapter XVII
Majesties' Hall. . .

Chapter XVIII
The immense stone over the crag. . .

Chapter XIX
The arrow in the eye. . .

Chapter XX
Benx village. . .

Chapter XXI
The Fidnemed project. . .

Chapter XXII
Senbec. . .

Chapter XXIII
Some riders are coming. . .

Chapter XXIV
The interment. . .

Chapter XXV
Raven Hills

Chapter XXVI
A bird disappears beyond the horizon. . .

Chapter XXVII
Four little leaves. . .

Chapter XXVIII
The reencounter. . .

Chapter XXIX
The burning wheat ear. . .

Chapter XXX
The blue light. . .

Chapter XXXI
The hawk and the raven

Chapter XXXII
Raven route. . .

Chapter XXXIII
Fiachad's love. . .

Chapter XXXIV
The hawk feather. . .

Chapter XXXV
One day later. . .

Chapter XXXVI
Ótun. . .

Chapter XXXVII
Farewell to a friend. . .

Chapter XXXVIII
Farewell flowers. . .

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

In remote times, the World was quite different from what we know nowadays. It was a strange world, and time was much slower for most of its inhabitants. Even further, it might have been a timeless time.

Nature was manifested with all its grandeur, and exultantly was expanding without limits on solid ground in the bottomless and mysterious sea and beautiful and bewildering sky, where lords of the mist, winds and storms were conversing with heavenly bodies and stars.

Intricate jungles and shadowy forests inhabiting the earth, extended through plains, entered valleys, climbed hills and ventured into high mountains. Cascades sang old stories while rivers roamed the World and muttered words and had eyes and ears, and dreams of all of them were mighty because, mingled with dreams of thinking creatures, were one in the act of dreaming.

Green meadows opened out like robes spattered by wild flowers and plants of every kind, ladies of life and death. Widespread meadows were sleeping never-broken dreams under winter snow, while during springtime, when the thaw unveiled its treasures, they roused themselves to the call of the sun; then they were transformed into very pure light-blue-colored water mirrors, which without haste were heading toward highlands to find any river, lake or lagoon inhabited by creatures of pale and elongated faces with a hint of immortality, who were wandering over the waters, or hiding themselves in the depth of their palaces of bubbles and seaweeds.

Mountains were really impossible to reach, and its foothills became insurmountable; thundering volcanoes spoke the language of fire, only interpreted in nightmares and also through cryptic spells by the inhabitants of that World that today is lost but so remote and forgotten that only certain creatures survived those ravages caused by oblivion and indifference, superstition and fanaticism of those who came behind. In fact, every document remains lost, burned, hidden or entirely destroyed by damp, bugs, fire or passage of time. Subsequently, all this emerged and was changed by authors of legends and children's stories which, in turn, had been narrated in rural areas from generation to generation.

A wide variety of animals lived in the Old World. As a rule, they did not know the terror of being chased; most of them never met those who inhabited there in those remote times. The peoples spoke different languages, some of them were similar, and others so different that inhabitants of distant places, beyond the sea and sky, seemingly had brought them from extended and desolate territories because of the sudden irruption of frightful cataclysms and indescribable hecatombs.

There were very few written languages. Petroglyphs, runes and hieroglyphs were interpreted by sages or some few learned individuals, because ordinary people did not know how to read or write; moreover, many peoples were forbidden to do so. Therefore, in fact their whole history vanished in the mists of time.

Enormous distances between lands, kingdoms and villages, dangers in the jungle and unmapped lonely paths, inhospitable deserts, and hidden lakes and marshes dissuaded any person willing to dare and enter them. In those remote times, any abandonment of the native soil, village or region was as if in our days we left the Earth on board of a spacecraft toward an uncertain destination. As a rule, the exile was equivalent to death.

All previous sayings could have been enough to prevent the expansion of certain groups to other territories, and to stay in the same place and eventually disappear until their extinction by different motivations; in fact they vanished without any trail behind. Suddenly, others abandoned their temples and colossal buildings and simple houses, which even in certain cases are preserved by jungles and mysteries; in other cases, frightful cataclysms destroyed their habitat enclosing them in mountains or sinking them under sea waters, apparently like in the ancient Lemurian continent or in the no less ancient Atlantis.

The First-Born, angels and archangels, sometimes also called *sages*, *geniuses* or *masters* –all of them higher spirits– were those who along with the thinking creatures travelled through the hard transmutation path.

Oki was the word used by the ancients for identifying some creatures gradually recognized by the first inhabitants of the World. Such ancients saw them getting out of caves in the mountains, descending into the valley, building their houses, growing the land, taming their horses, making weapons, burying the dead, erecting palaces, accumulating wealth and killing each other and every opponent in order to get gold, power and glory.

Some of those who survived in the Old Peoples witnessed how the okis had repeated their wrong behavior of yore, and a group of them were involved in their mission of preventing the repetition of the same mistakes; therefore, they created the Brotherhood of Light expecting the evolution of those men.

In the beginning of times, two swords were created, to be in tension but never confronted: the South Sword and the North Sword, such as night and day, heat and cold, arrival and start, and sleep and wakefulness... and life and death are likewise balanced... without any prevalence over any opponent because both of them are creating and re-creating each other.

Members of the Brotherhood of the Light knew how a fight between the opposites was bringing about unexpected outcomes in the thinking creatures, because balance was dangerously and whimsically marking one of the two poles and they hardly could find any balance.

The imbalance is easily set in the psyche of the thinking creatures because psyche is also dual like nature and, being a part of it, these thinking beings are a part of the same condition.

The Shadow Lord was and is the imbalance factor that ever was and ever will remain. Therefore, as perfection is growing up, also the Shadow does, although apparently is aseptic and lifeless.

Here is the story of a young Prince forced to emerge from his isolation, imperfection of his nature, and mistakes of his ancestors, and even from his confusion, guilt and madness. Here is the mission of this young man through the rescue of the South Sword from the hands of the Shadow Lord to restore order in the World, an analogy that re-created a balance that defeats the Shadow, in our own ego, during the fight of the two opposites. Such balance is nothing else than the result of a hard personal work individually made from the moment when one becomes a conscious master of his actions.