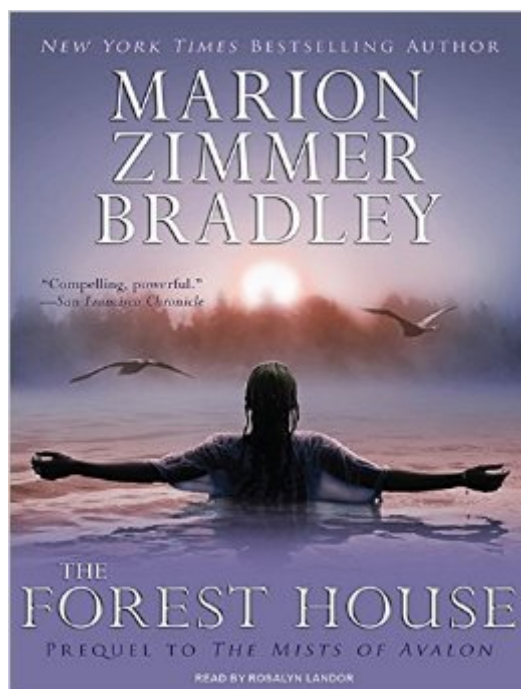


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# The Forest House (Avalon)



## Synopsis

She was Eilan, the daughter of a Druidic warleader and gifted with visions. In a land struggling to survive both Roman conquerors and her own people's enemies, surely fate had marked her to become a priestess of the Forest House. But first Eilan had chosen a different, forbidden path-to love Gaius, a soldier of mixed blood among the legions sent to subdue her country. So she must hide a terrible secret when she is anointed as the new High Priestess. With mighty enemies poised to usurp the wealth of magic the Forest House sheltered, Eilan could only trust in the power of the great Goddess to find her destiny amidst the treacherous labyrinth in which fate had placed her.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Marion Zimmer Bradley's "The Forest House" is a prequel to her bestselling Arthurian novel, "The Mists of Avalon." Both novels revolve around the goddess religion in early Britain. "The Forest House," set in 1st century Roman ruled Britannia, is the home of Druidic priestesses who keep the ancient rites of learning, healing, and magic lore. Ms. Bradley writes of the Roman conquest of Celtic Britain and the political and religious implications of the occupation. Roman rule also impacted the role of women in Britain. Goddess worship, women's freedom and power waned under the Romans. This novel gives the author's historical version of Avalon and the Lady of the Lake. Eilan, the daughter of a Druidic warrior and granddaughter of Ardanos, Arch-Druid of Britannia, is gifted with the "sight" and has longed to serve the Goddess as a healer-priestess in the Forest

House. She meets and falls in love with Gaius, a half Roman-half British youth, and son of the Roman Prefect Macellius Severus, second-in-command in Britain. They want to marry but are forbidden. Heartbroken, Eilan fulfills her original wish and dedicates herself to the Lady. Ms. Bradley blends a fascinating story with accurate research to give the reader a good picture of early Britain and the various political, cultural and religious factions, both local and Roman, which vied for power there. Bradley's narrative is clear and her plot is believable, as are her characters. I prefer "The Mists of Avalon," not just because of the subject matter, but because the plot and characters are more complex. However, this is a solid novel with a sound plot and worth the read. JANA

I read the series backwards, and all three books were equally wonderful. The Mists of Avalon I actually think is the best one, but the Forest House is the first in the series and is positively beautiful. I wish I would have started out in the right direction. This book practically glues you to the story in the first chapter and keeps you there till the end. You endure the trials and feel the strength of the characters as if you were really there. Bradley works her magic bringing you into a realistic story that spins you into a world full of magic, action and romance. This is a can't miss book.

this prequel is still excellent. The story is set in the days of Roman occupation of Britain. Gaius, a young Roman officer and son of the local Roman commandant with his British wife has met and fallen in love with Eilan, the daughter of a powerful Druid family. Neither family approves of the match and forces the two apart. For the rest of their lives they met again and again only to be torn apart. Ultimately their unfulfilled love sets the stage for the events in MISTS OF AVALON. The story is again told, at least in part, from a feminine point of view. As in MISTS there is a Greek tragedy feel of unescapable doom. The characters are engaging and 'feel real', the plot is compelling making this a book that is hard to put down. It does not quite live up to MISTS due at least in part, to its more simplistic story line. Unlike MISTS' numerous story lines THE FOREST HOUSE focuses on Eilan and Gaius with Cailleam, a priestess of the Forest House filling in gaps. This prequel is also significantly shorter. Still for any fan of MISTS OF AVALON this is a must read and would be enjoyable on its own as well.

Bradley has outdone herself with this book. The characters were so alive, all of them. When they went through their hard times I felt like I was right there with them. I cheered on Eilan and booed Ardano. And in the end I felt the pain they went through. This whole series has been so spell binding that it's uncanny. To think that a mere mortal or human wrote this series, is simply

unfathomable. I feel they have given me inspiration and happiness among many other feelings. Marion Zimmer Bradley has made me laugh, cry, love, and hurt with her series of books, and I can only pray that there's more where this has come from. The woman behind these books should be more recognized. I hope there is a day when the name Marion Zimmer Bradley is a name that is known in every family. I would also recommend this book to anyone who likes to read Arthurian Legend. And for these people I have one more piece of advice. I read this series out of order. I would suggest that you read Forest House first. Then Lady of Avalon, then Mists. I praise Bradley for the hundreds of pages of joy and amazement she has given me. Thank you very much.

"The Forest House" (or "The Forests of Avalon") is a good book, no doubt - but it is not as good as "The Mists Of Avalon", by any means. The book is too long compared to the content of the story, but it is written very well - if not as good as "The Mists...". The characters are very well described, but not always totally realistic. The force of the book is the historical facts about the Roman occupation, and it gives a new perspective to "The Mists..." because the Celtic religion is described. Also, a lot of information about the religious background of the characters in "The Mists..." is given. Should be read if you liked "The Mists...". (P.S. I'm sorry that my English isn't perfect.)

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