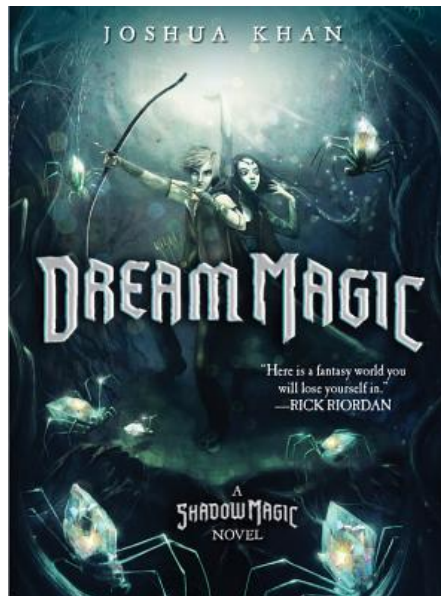




# Dream Magic

*Joshua Khan*

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# Dream Magic

*Joshua Khan*

## **Dream Magic** Joshua Khan

In Book 2 of a three book series, things are dire for the inhabitants of Castle Gloom and the surrounding villages. The undead are leaving their graves in droves, a troll army is on the march from the north, and people are mysteriously disappearing from their homes. The people of Gehenna are blaming their misfortunes on Lilith Shadow, their young queen. They believe she has cursed them by using magic, a practice forbidden to women. With her trusty executioner among the missing and her blackguard soldiers busy battling trolls, it is up to Lily and her friend Thorn to root out the real cause of all the trouble. Their search will uncover ugly truths and eventually lead to a nightmarish confrontation with nothing less than the rulership of the realm at stake. Zombies, ghosts, trolls, dream weavers, a black-hearted villain, and a giant hero bat are only some of the imaginative delights that await readers who relish a soaring adventure combined with a hair-raising mystery.

## **Dream Magic Details**

Date : Published April 11th 2017 by Disney-Hyperion

ISBN : 9781484737620

Author : Joshua Khan

Format : Hardcover 352 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Childrens, Middle Grade, Fiction

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# From Reader Review Dream Magic for online ebook

## Melissa Michelle says

Looking forward to reading more from this author and hopefully not last book in this series.

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## Deborah says

### Fresh breath of true imagination

The second book did not let me down. I was so impressed with the freshness of Shadow Magic and wasn't sure if Dream Magic could live up to my expectations but it did so with a vengeance. Thank you Joshua Khan for the breath of fresh air!!

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## Joan says

Lily and Thorn face another, really nasty challenge, this time without much help from her ghost dad, Iblis. Lily discovers that her nasty grandfather had some unknown nastiness left that is going to give her real problems. This was a creative, wonderful book and it is only my fear of spiders that drives down the stars from 4 to 3. I agree that the type of spider used was creative, but librarians, if you know that a patron is afraid of spiders, do not hand them this book!

Thorn and Lily are beginning to see past the prejudices of class and rank and suspect that they really like each other. Although apart for most of the book, they are working together and against most people's prejudices, particularly of trolls. Dott is a wonderful character, and I have to admit I'm rather glad to see Mary back in the story to show the power of forgiveness.

I'm looking forward to the next one but I really hope we are done with the type of spider used in this installment! A quick addition to praise Hyperion for stunning cover art! Oh, all right, for the sake of the cover and excellent story, I'll raise it to four stars, rounding up from 3.5!

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## ~Tina~ says

Such an adventure!! Love this series so much!!!  
Gimme Gimme book 3!  
<3

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## Judith says

A touch of macabre, magic and adventure - Lily, the Sorcerer Queen of the Shadow People and Thorne, her

squire and friend, embark on yet another dark and sometimes terrifying adventure. This is the second book in the series and I would recommend reading them in order but you could read this as a stand alone. Khan has a way of writing that "drops" you into the middle of the story and it's so easy to envision this magical world and all its odd characters. Looking forward to the next chapter!

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## **Nicole Hewitt says**

This review and many more can be found on my blog: [Feed Your Fiction Addiction](#)

*Dream Magic* is great fun and highly imaginative. I wish I'd read the first book on the series, though—when the book was offered to me, I was told it was the second in a series, but that it was a standalone, and that was sort of true, in the sense that it had its own story arc, but it was definitely a continuation of the first book. On the positive side, it wasn't confusing at all—Khan did a great job of "reminding" readers what had already happened, but I was missing a connection to those events (and the characters that went with them). Still, considering that, it's actually amazing that I enjoyed the book so much—which is a testament to Khan's storytelling skills.

### **What Fed My Addiction:**

Complete story arc.

I mentioned this above, but it's worth repeating because I think this is a fantastic feature in a MG series. Though the story very obviously is a continuation of book one, it has its own complete story arc. There is a new villain introduced and that villain's story is resolved (with room for the possibility of continuation) by the end. If other MG readers are anything like my kids (especially my son when he was that age), this is key. My son as a middle schooler had a short attention span. He might pick up a series and start reading it again completely out of order. He also might binge-read a whole series or wait six months to read the next books. Series like these where each book can stand alone are (but are still very much a cohesive series) are perfect for him!

Darkly different.

I loved the supernatural creatures in this story and the way that Khan balances making them mostly harmless but still keeping them spooky. For instance, the zombies don't go around attacking people for their brains—but they apparently do like to eat them. Plus, they're decomposing and keep needing to be sewn back together. And they're not great communicators (their speech sounds pretty much like moans and groans). I thought that this was a fun way to play with these supernatural characters and keep them very creepy without being truly horrific. There were lots of creatures too—ghosts, zombies, trolls (who were sort of seen as the enemy, but there were a few allies as well). And Lily's obvious love for all her "people" was charming.

The consequences of magic.

One of the biggest themes of this book is Lily trying to learn how to control her magic and the consequences when she uses it. The people in her kingdom believe that a female who uses magic is a curse, so at first she has to hide her ability—but it soon becomes necessary to show the world. Every time Lily uses her magic, though (especially in her relative ignorance), it drains her and, even more importantly, it changes her. Since she doesn't know what all the consequences will be, she has to be very careful. Of course, caution isn't always possible when you're being attacked by supernatural creatures!!

## What Left Me Hungry for More:

Little bit of a slow start.

The beginning of the book felt a teensy bit slow to me, but I think the main reason for that was because it was establishing where these characters had ended up and the state of the kingdom after the last book. It was great to have that information, but since I wasn't connected to those events or characters yet, it took me a little while to feel truly engaged. The action didn't pick up until about a third of the way through the book when the first threat really showed up.

This was a fun, slightly dark (but not at all too dark) middle grade read. I highly recommend reading the first book instead of jumping in at this second installment. I waffled a little bit on my rating for this one between 3.5 and 4 stars but ended up landing on 4/5 stars because I'm fairly certain that if I had read the first book, I would have easily given it 4 stars.

*\*\*\*Disclosure: I received this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. No other compensation was given and all opinions are my own.\*\*\**

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## AlenGarou says

Joshua Khan è una conferma. Non solo questo romanzo è il degno successore del precedente, ma è così carico di avventura, magia, misteri e sentimenti che cattura letteralmente il lettore, trasportandolo nel tetro regno di Geenna.

Eh, sì. Mi era mancato.

Anzi, mi erano mancati! Thorn e Lily sono fantastici...

Prima di annunciare le novità, devo fare una nota di merito. Di solito molti romanzi nel mezzo di una serie si limitano a continuare le avventure iniziate nei primi volumi; qui, invece, sono perfettamente concatenati, nonostante la storia abbia fatto un passo avanti. Ed è proprio grazie a questi riferimenti e legami che la trama scorre fluida come l'acqua, oltre che a districare parecchi nodi!

Ergo, questo libro non si dimostra solo una piacevole lettura, ma una lettura ben congegnata.

La storia comincia da dove l'abbiamo lasciata. Lily è diventata regina e non ha un attimo di pace; non solo deve nascondere i suoi poteri alla corte e allenarsi nella biblioteca con il fantasma del padre senza che nessuno lo sappia, ma il suo regno è in declino. A nord, i troll sono sul piede di guerra; nei villaggi i morti continuano a resuscitare creando non pochi problemi e a Castel Cupo vi sono sempre più ambasciatori e principi in cerca di punti deboli e di alleanze facili.

Dal canto suo, anche Thorn non se la passa meglio. La vita di uno scudiero non è certo facile e il giovane se la deve vedere non solo con le angherie dei suoi compagni, ma anche con quella testa quadra di Wade, uno dei suoi amici più cari. Come se non bastasse, ormai lui e Lily si vedono solo per sbaglio e questo porterà il giovane verso una istintiva gelosia nei confronti di tutti coloro che stanno a corte. So cute.

Ed è così che una nuova avventura avrà inizio.

Thorn e gli altri scudieri verranno mandati a investigare sulla distruzione di una fattoria nelle vicinanze. Tutti pensano che i responsabili siano i troll, dati i buchi sul tetto e la sparizione della famiglia che vi abitava, ma il giovane non è d'accordo. Nonostante sia un bifolco, non è certo stupido. Si accorgerà subito che qualcosa non quadra, e non solo perché il bestiame è stato risparmiato, ma perché non vi sono impronte nella neve e il cane dei contadini non li ha avvisati in tempo. Deciso a indagare per conto suo, farà una perlustrazione con Ade, il fidato e gigantesco pipistrello, e infatti... troverà ben presto i corpi dei due contadini, ma dei loro figli nessuna traccia.

Tutto però incomincerà ad andare di male in peggio durante la cena di addio del nuovo principe della casa

Tifon. Non solo Merrick e la sua banda di saltimbanchi si esibiranno, ma ritornerà persino Gabriel Solar, il fidanzato di Lily (sì, non è un ex, dato che nessuno ha annullato il fidanzamento). Lui e il suo giullare (che in seguito si scoprirà essere il boia del casato Solar, unica persona al mondo che effettivamente ci tiene al ragazzo) faranno parte di quest'avventura con tutti i lati negativi del caso, dato che il giovane è piacevole quanto lo sterco di cavallo sotto gli stivali.

Comunque, mentre la festa procederà con qualche inghippo, scoppierà un incendio doloso in una delle torri dove sono ospitati gli zombie. Thorn, che ovviamente si trovava lì per puro caso, riuscirà a salvare i non morti per un pelo, ma ciò metterà a rischio la sua vita. Sarà Lily a ricambiare il favore, ma così facendo tutti scopriranno che in realtà è in grado di usare la magia. Quel che peggio, è che tale evento non era altro che un diversivo. Infatti, Lily possedeva l'unica chiave in grado di aprire le porte della biblioteca e, purtroppo, tale chiave le verrà rubata dal Tessitore, individuo mezzo storpio imbucato alla festa grazie alla banda di Merrick. A causa del furto, lei e suo padre verranno separati e questo la metterà in guai seri. Non dimentichiamoci che Lily ha solo 13 anni e non ha il benché minimo desiderio di regnare.

Ma la chiave dovrà aspettare. Nell'aria c'è una minaccia ben peggiore.

Dai corpi dei contadini recuperati, usciranno dei ragni gioiello, in una scena piuttosto disgustosa a mio avviso. Tale creature sono insidiose, dato che il loro morso è narcotico. Si nutrono infatti di sogni, specie quelli dei bambini, da cui ricavano non solo energia, ma anche magia. Da qui un indizio sul titolo: dream magic.

Thorn verrà morso mentre tenterà di difendere Lily e, nel Tempio del Sogno, incontrerà il padre della ragazza. L'uomo li metterà in guardia sulla reale minaccia che incombe su Castel Cupo e così i nostri prodi decideranno d'indagare sul mistero legato ai ragni, andando in una cittadina chiamata Malanimo.

Qui non solo ritroveranno Mary, ma verranno a conoscenza di una tremenda verità: il Tessitore non è altri che il fratellastro di Lily, nato da una relazione clandestina tra Iblis e una strega, molto prima che lui si sposasse con la madre della ragazzina. Il nonno, non contento della cosa, fece bruciare sul rogo la donna e il bambino, che però sopravvisse grazie alla magia. Venne mandato in esilio a studiare magia presso il casato Tifon, dove non fece altro che mettere in atto la sua vendetta contro gli Shadow.

Dopo questo bellissimo pugno nello stomaco, Lily tenterà non poco. Non solo non vorrà uccidere il fratello, ma proverà disperatamente a farlo ragionare, nonostante sia consapevole dell'inutilità della cosa. Lui vuole solo vendetta e per farlo è disposto a radere il suolo Geenna con i suoi ragni.

Il Tessitore li libererà su Malanimo attraverso una nave Nembo. Tale nave, appartenuta al casato Tifon, può volare solo grazie alla magia intrisa nelle ragnatele dei insetti ed è così che l'uomo è riuscito a creare tutto quel caos. Sulla nave Thorn non troverà solo i dispersi (tra cui Tyburn), ma anche dei troll! Fa due più due e bingo! Come antagonista il fratello della sua amata ha davvero pensato a tutto.

La situazione sarà a dir poco tragica, se non fosse per un aiuto d'eccezione. Gli zombie. Essendo morti, sono immuni al morso dei ragni e questo ribalterà non poco il corso della battaglia per difendere Castel Cupo. Tra voli incredibili, lotte nei sogni e un super ragno gigante, i nostri eroi riusciranno a strappare la vittoria al Tessitore per un soffio. E solo grazie a Thorn, che farà ciò che Lily non è in grado di fare. Avvelenerà il fratellastro della sovrana grazie a una zanna del ragno più grande, facendolo cadere in un sonno perpetuo. Con la minaccia dei ragni eliminata, toccherà passare a quella dei troll. Anche qui, un aiuto inaspettato ribalterà le sorti del regno. Ricordate Dott, la piccola troll trovata nei boschi (e da qui si deduce che anche lei era stata catturata dal Tessitore, ma per chissà quale motivo è caduta dalla nave)? Ebbene, si scoprirà essere la figlia del nuovo re dei troll. Questo porterà a una nuova e, se spera, lunga alleanza tra i due regni.

Insomma, tutto è bene ciò che finisce bene?

Chi lo sa.

Sono davvero impaziente di leggere il seguito.

Comunque, non è solo la storia a essere emozionante e ben scritta; questa serie si dimostra entusiasmante anche per i suoi personaggi.

Thorn è assolutamente il mio preferito. Potrà avere molti difetti ed essere impulsivo, ma si dimostra scaltro e più sveglio di chiunque altro. È poi l'unico a mettere in discussione le scelte dei nobili e non ha paura di

affrontare persino Lily quando non è concorde con lei. D'altro canto la giovane si dimostrerà all'altezza nel ruolo di regina, eppure capiterà che il suo atteggiamento sembri frivolo. È solo apparenza, eppure questo rende realistico il suo personaggio. Devo ammettere però che non riesco ad immaginarmela con i capelli bianchi... Durante la battaglia per difendere Castel Cupo, userà fin troppa magia e questo avrà delle ripercussioni sul suo corpo. Comunque, Thorn e Lily sono fatti l'uno per l'altra e questo è palese a tutti. Altro apprezzamento va ad Ade. Sebbene sia mostruoso, le scene con lui sono semplicemente magnifiche. Per quanto riguarda gli altri personaggi di contorno, anche loro ci hanno messo qualcosa nel rendere quest'avventura ben congeniata e... Sì, senza Gabriel non potremmo avere delle splendide bestemmie per la sua... ignoranza? Bah.

Detto questo, prendo commiato e vi aspetto alla prossima recensione. Che sarà scritta in modo osceno dopo ore e ore di agonia davanti al pc. Sì, ridendo e scherzando ultimamente ci metto secoli a scriverle, dato che il caldo mi uccide in ogni senso... Ma c'est la vie

Bye bye

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### **Emilie says**

I enjoyed the second installment in the Shadow Magic series. The characters continued on journeys that seemed organic and true, and the plot was different and exciting. This was a great book.

In the beginning, I did have a little bit of trouble getting going while reading, because it seemed like there were a bunch of different things just going on and happening to Lilly and Thorn, and nothing really seemed related. I felt like I was still waiting for the story to really get started and I was already 1/3 of the way into the book. Then everything snapped into place, and I was like, "Oh!" I also liked that, while part of the mystery of the book took a while to solve, once important clues were revealed, Lilly and Thorn figured it out immediately.

I really did enjoy reading this book, and would recommend it to others, from late elementary all the way up. The adventure, mystery, magic, and friendship in this story make it a wonderful read.

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### **Rebecca says**

An excellent sequel to Khan's first book "Shadow Magic". This installment follows the adventures of Lily Shadow, the 12-year-old queen of the ghosts and ghouls of the Shadow Realm and Thorn, a son of the forest and an advocate of all things natural.

A wayward sorcerer is on the loose, and his attacks threaten to send all six empires into war. Lily and Thorn use their unique talents to make amends to the past as well as ensuring a brighter future. But maybe not too bright. The series will continue which means there will be a lot more trouble that needs to be sorted out in the future.

Highly recommended.

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### **The Books Blender says**

Questa recensione è presente anche sul blog-> <http://thebooksblender.altervista.org...>

- *Ho ricevuto una copia di questo libro in cambio di un'onesta recensione* -

Preceduto da:

- Shadow Magic

**Bentornati a Geena** con i suoi zombie «tornati per restare», i suoi spettri e anche i suoi assetati vampiri.

**Lily**, anzi - *ehm* - Lady Shadow regna sulle cupe terre dei suoi antenati, riceve doni meravigliosi da altri paesi e ascolta le lamentele dei propri sudditi.

Il **ritorno dei non-morti** ha infatti creato non pochi sconvolgimenti con i vivi con i primi che pretendono l'affitto o la restituzione delle proprie stanze e gli altri un po' restii ad adattarsi alle richieste dei defunti.

Ma ci sono altre novità a **Castello Cupo**: Mary, la storica e affezionata tata, è scomparsa; Tyburn, l'enigmatico e indistruttibile boia, è sparito in missione; ...in compenso le proposte di matrimonio rivolte a Lily fioccano senza sosta (almeno non ha più l'antipatico Gabriel Solar tra i piedi... o forse no...).

**Thorn**, in attesa della primavera per ricongiungersi con genitori e fratelli, prosegue con il suo addestramento da scudiero a cavalcioni di **Ade, il mega pipistrello** dalle zanne aguzze, le ali enormi e il cuore tenero.

Pare, però, che i Troll - finora tenutesi alla larga per paura di **Lord Iblis Shadow**, padre di Lily - abbiano infine deciso di invadere Geena. E già si registrano i primi abitanti aggrediti e, ahimè, uccisi.

Qualcosa, tuttavia, non torna. I Troll sono colossali, impossibili non notarli. Ma di loro non c'è traccia alcuna né avvistamenti da parte di qualcuno. Gli unici indizi sono dei buchi nei tetti delle abitazioni assaltate e, ovviamente, i corpi delle vittime.

Una tremenda tempesta si sta per abbattere su Castello Cupo e su tutta Geena, ma i suoi abitanti faranno in tempo a rendersi conto della minaccia?

Il secondo capitolo della saga iniziata con Shadow Magic non potrebbe cominciare meglio: volti noti da riscoprire e un mistero da risolvere.

Le ambientazioni cui Khan ci ha accolto con il primo capitolo della serie tornano anche qui con maggiori dettagli di Castello Cupo e della storia di Geena. A questi si aggiungono **redivivi, navi nembo, ragni gioiello, membri del Consiglio Piumato**... insomma, un carosello di particolari che un giovane lettore non può non apprezzare (e che, a onor del vero, risultano gradevoli anche a un lettore più grandicello).

Approfondiamo anche la conoscenza della casate e la loro attuale situazione - spesso di conflitto - con le altre. La più sfortunata pare essere **Casa Tifon, signori dell'aria**, ma anche gli anticipatici e bellissimi Solar non sembrano passarsela tanto meglio e gli stessi Shadow hanno all'orizzonte parecchi guai.

E assistiamo all'incursione di un altro tipo di magia ancora agli albori: la **scienza**.

La storia si alterna seguendo ora Thron ora Lily e ognuno dei due ragazzi contribuisce al *puzzle* generale

facendo la propria parte con coraggio. I cambi di scena nei passaggi più critici aumentano l'aspettativa e il bisogno di conoscere la sorte dei personaggi.

Insomma, **Dream Magic è una storia ben condotta e scorrevole**; i suoi personaggi provano e sbagliano, ma imparano e riprovano di nuovo senza arrendersi. Ognuno dei due è capace di salvarsi da solo e anche di accettare le conseguenze delle proprie decisioni.

Adatta sicuramente, anzi perfetta, per un pubblico giovane, anche un lettore più grande può restare piacevolmente in compagnia di Thron e Lily.

Certo, come ebbi modo di scrivere anche per Shadow Magic, c'è qualche punto che un lettore adulto fatica ad apprezzare, considerando anche che in Dream Magic si presentano alcuni parallelismi con il precedente capitolo.

Ammetto però, senza vergogna, che se fossi stata in-target avrei apprezzato moltissimo Thron, Castel Cupo e, soprattutto, Lily. Anche così, comunque, la curiosità di sapere cosa accadrà ai due protagonisti è forte!

Quindi, avanti con il prossimo! Questa volta ci aspetta il Sultanato di Fuoco!

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## Annie says

Reseña completa-- <http://bit.ly/2HrfkB8>

Frases de Libros-- <http://bit.ly/2CigOtm>

Si ya había amado con toda el alma el primer libro, leer el segundo ha sido una delicia, debo admitir que si estos libros hubieran existido cuando yo era una pequeña cosa lectora los habría amado desde pequeña, son tan divertidos y llenos de ese humor en ocasiones oscuro que no puedo evitar reírme, de algún modo el autor logra que cosas tan oscuras como Zombies, Fantasma, Arañas de cristal y sinfín de criaturas de la oscuridad, convivan en una historia que es apta para cualquier público joven e infantil , quiero dejar esto claro porque quizás al hablar de tantas criaturas de “terror” se pueda malinterpretar que este libro es sombrío o terrorífico pero no es así pues ahí recae el talento del autor al convertir un reino de nigromantes en una historia llena de lecciones de amistad y autodescubrimiento que cualquier lector joven disfrutará. Y no solo los más jóvenes o pequeños del hogar, también lectores adultos pueden disfrutar esta fantástica novela. Ya sabemos que las segundas partes no son tan buenas como las primeras ¿verdad? Pues mentira vil, pues Magia de Ensueño si que logra superar a Magia Sombría y complementar y entretener la historia, aunque debo admitir que me da algo de miedo que todavía siga un tercer libro pues en este siento que los cabos sueltos ya se atarán y aunque entiendo que ahora viajaremos al reino de K’leef y conoceremos más de su cultura, cosa que me encanta pues todo el contexto de la historia me fascina y la forma en que se han creado estas culturas y reinos con sus propios mitos y leyendas es una cosa genial, es solo que no quisiera que una historia tan tan buena se alargue de forma infinita y se vuelva algo muy repetitivo y enredado. No sé si me estoy explicando de la mejor manera. Realmente estos libros me gustan mucho y los disfruto un montón pero no sé que otras palabras usar para poder transmitirles lo tiernamente creepy que es la historia, lo bien armado de la atmósfera, lo genial de los personajes, el humor que transmite la historia, las lecciones e interacciones tan bonitas que tiene entre los

protagonistas y, básicamente, lo imperdible que es esta historia.

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## **Jessica Robbins says**

For complete review check out my blog at <https://booksaplentybookreviews.blogs...>

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## **The Belle says**

When Dream Magic was sent to me for review, I was intrigued. The cover art by Ben Hibon is stunning, and after a quick flip through the pages, I was delighted to find that more of the superbly intricate and uniquely dark illustrations were included. My only complaint about these drawings is that there are so few – they are spread throughout the book almost like the tease of freshly baked bread wafting from a French bakery as you pass by, leaving my mouth watering as I craved more. The talented illustrator has many impressive credits attached to his resume; most notably for readers is his contribution to the animation direction of The Tale of The Three Brothers in Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows. The cover is as alluring as it is mystical, with shadows oozing from every corner and crevice, and an eerie white light hovering over the character's heads. I was hooked.

I was eager to crack this book open and reveal the secrets hidden within, already curious about the archer and apparent witch featured on the front cover, who seem to be teaming up against something that appeared to be spiders made from crystal. But before I entered into the world of Dream Magic, I did my due diligence, as I do with any book I am about to begin, and discovered that this was actually the second book of a mid-grade fantasy series.

I have to admit, learning that this was a series made me even more excited. I know that series that are not already published in their completion can sometimes put readers off, as they are afraid of getting caught up in a story only to have to wait an undeterminable amount of time for the next book to be published, but I'm hoping that's not the case with this particular set of books. The first book, Shadow Magic, came out in April of 2016 and this second book is due to be out for general sale next Monday. So here's hoping that the trend continues and author Joshua Khan can crank another book out by this time next year.

My goal this year with my blog is to feature a review and a recommendation each week and not repeat authors all year long. I've found that this is going to be a lot harder than I'd originally thought. While, yes, I've read literally 1000's of books, I've noticed that what I love most is getting caught up in a series and falling into a deep and meaningful cadence with a set of characters. I love watching them grow up and evolve. I love the transitions of relationships and the familiarity that serial books can lend. And as a result of my attachments to serial literature, I tend to read the same authors over and over. I was happy to have a new author thrown into my mix. I'm always on the hunt for a good book in this age bracket, as I have two children in it.

Shadow Magic is the tale of two characters set on a parallel path. Thorn is the 12-year old son of an assumed outlaw. But don't let his age fool you. Thorn has grown up rough and tough, and he has a mouth to match. After his father took the blame for a crime Thorn committed, he had to leave the family home and strike out as far away as he could, leading the law away from his wife and children. Thorn waited as long as he could after his father's hasty departure, but his guilt and shame over what he'd done to break up his family

overtaken his sense of reason and he had to follow. Instead of catching up to his dad, he is instead captured and sold into slavery – but not for long. He's bought by a man named Tyburn, the executioner of House Shadow, rulers of the people in the faraway land of Gehenna. Thorn reluctantly travels with the quiet and esteemed executioner to a city that celebrates and honors their dead, and he tries not to become too offended at the strange customs of this dark land. But as is his lot in life, Thorn's mouth keeps landing him in trouble.

Lily Shadow is an orphan, and has gone from being a typical and, moody 13-year old girl to the ruler of the land. The role of Lady Shadow was never one she intended to have, as she was the youngest child. But since her parents and brother have been murdered by a team of bandits and her family line ends with her, it is up to Lily to take command over everyone and everything, and it is not a task that is to be taken lightly. She's feeling daunted by the task at hand – her impending marriage to a son of a rival House, but there are problems much closer at hand.

Thorn and Lily's adventures in Shadow Magic are fast-paced and richly written, and I cannot say enough good things about it. I was thrilled to find a book that I know my son will bite into this summer. Dream Magic picks up right where its predecessor leaves off, throwing us into yet another set of obstacles wrought with magic and deception.

It looks like trolls are beginning to attack the citizens of Gehenna, or are they? Several houses have been broken into and their inhabitants carted off. But the work of trolls is usually a lot messier and with a lot less mystery. Thorn and his band of squires are in the midst of investigating the ongoing problem, but there's another issue surrounding the castle and its lands – zombies. Ever since Lily performed the forbidden art of magic weeks ago, more and more of the dead are becoming UN-dead, and it's becoming a cumbersome dilemma. What is Lily supposed to do with all of these “new” subjects? Where will they live and how will they make a living when they are literally falling apart around themselves?

And if Thorn doesn't have enough on his full plate already, the constant train of suitors lining up for Lily's affections are a burr in his side. Not that he's into her that way – of course not! – but he's getting tired of having to appease and bow down to yet another lord around the castle. With every “m'lord” that comes out of his mouth, he is reminding of his peasant lineage. And now Gabriel Solar – everyone's favorite brat – is back with a new set of grievances, not to mention the curious alchemist from another distant land that's poking around. Everything is complicated, including the unspoken feelings swirling around and between Thorn and Lily, but the problems around the castle are taking up too much of their time for any exploration.

Lily knows she's not supposed to practice magic. She knows it's forbidden. But there has never been a ruler of the Land of Shadows who wasn't a sorcerer, and she feels like it's an important trade to learn. And now that she knows she's halfway good at it, there really is no turning back. She spends night after night holed up in the Shadow Library, practicing her skills under the careful and encouraging eye of her father's ghost. But it's scary to think of how her people would treat her if they knew the truth. Women who are caught conjuring enchantments and illusions are historically put to the stake to burn, and she can't imagine that she would be considered any different – even if she is the current Lady Shadow.

But after a strange encounter with a disfigured Court Jester in disguise, Lily is left locked out of the library and sealed off from her teacher and father, pulling her carefully maintained magical teachings up to a screeching halt. Why did the stranger care so much about the box of her father's old and random correspondence he stole from the library? And why did he steal the key, locking the door to the library for who knows how long? Lily hardly has time to process the incident; news is traveling across Gehenna of a Troll King and an army making their way towards the castle, and she knows she doesn't have enough guards and military to withstand a fight like that. Especially not with their leader, Tyburn the feared executioner, out

of commission.

Thorn's suspicions were correct. It wasn't a band of trolls who have been carrying on in the countryside and terrorizing the folk of Gehenna. The culprits are actually crystalized spiders who upon biting their victim, send the fated person into a deep and dreamy sleep. But who is so desperate to put the citizens of the land to sleep, and why? Where are they being hidden, and how can he rescue them? Can he do it before the trolls bring war?

Fans of Harry Potter, How to Train Your Dragon, and Hotel Transylvania will be delighted with this new fantasy series. In a land full of magic, a giant flying bat, a hero with a smart mouth, and a determined female ruler, Dream Magic will keep readers of all ages turning the page in an anxious quest for more. What I loved most about this book was how it spoke to so many ages AND to both boys and girls. I have a 13 year-old daughter and never have a hard time finding books for her to read, but my 11-year old son is another story. We've flown through Percy Jackson, The Jedi Academy, and Diary of a Wimpy Kid, but he always needs something more, and doesn't latch onto books that are solely female driven. Dream Magic is unique in that it has both a boy and a girl starring as the hero; both with equal billing and equal page time. The story is vividly written and thrilling, with no lull in the plot (which means that the young readers aren't going to get bored, which I appreciate). I especially loved the scenes featuring Thorn riding his bat – the ever-opinionated Hades – and how both Thorn and Lily were always so quick to think of things from different angles. Any time a problem came up, they would combat it with a mixture of common sense and ingenuity, always using violence as a last resort.

I recommend this book for readers ages 8 and up, and for boys and girls alike. I give Dream Magic 5 out of 5 stars. Look for it next week when it hits bookstores, libraries, and online markets near you.

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### **Heather says**

Readers who loved *Shadow Magic*, Kahn's hero's journey featuring a peasant hero, goth princess, zombies, and giant flying bats, will want to read this sequel. Now that Lilly and Thorn have saved her kingdom from her evil uncle, there's still plenty of work to do--especially with troll attacks on the rise and Tyburn, the royal executioner, missing. Unsure of herself and what others will think of her magical abilities, Lilly spends much of her time consulting the ghost of her father, until someone steals the key to the library where she meets him. It soon becomes apparent that someone is manipulating the various kingdoms to fight against each other. With the help of the Solar executioner (who's trying to rescue the spoiled Gabriel Solar), Thorn and Lilly take the lead in saving the kingdom from this new, extremely dangerous, threat. Kahn's ability to turn the traditional fantasy types on their head continues to make this a world readers will want to return to. Besides being a lot of fun, there are rewarding and complex examinations of worthwhile themes such as good vs. evil, courage, and redemption.

\*digital review copy from NetGalley

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### **Alyson Kent says**

Thank you Netgalley and Disney-Hyperion for providing an ARC.

I was a little nervous going into Dream Magic because I loved Shadow Magic so much. It can be difficult to follow up a great first book and still meet expectations, but Dream Magic didn't disappoint.

I absolutely love this world and the characters that inhabit it (especially Hades). I love how Thorn is a dose of practicality amongst some of the crazy that happens, and Lily is still the sweetest Princess of Darkness I've ever met.

The world building is solid, and Lily is a wonderfully strong, yet flawed, character. She's learning as she goes, she admits to being afraid and unsure of her steps, but she's determined to do what's best for the people of her country. I've enjoyed watching her grow through the first two books.

Anxiously awaiting the third book, as I can't help but suspect certain things might be in the works and I would love to see them come to fruition. Already recommended that my library purchase it for their collection, and I have every intention of owning my own personal copy as soon as I can.

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