



Enshadowed

Kelly Creagh

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True love takes a twisted turn in the second book of this modern gothic romance trilogy channeling the dark brilliance of Edgar Allan Poe.

Varen Nethers is trapped in a perilous dreamworld—a treacherous and desolate realm where the terrifying stories of Edgar Allan Poe come to life. Isobel Lanley, plagued by strange visions and haunted by the nightmares of Varen's creation, is the only one who can save him.

Isobel knows that her only hope lies within a Baltimore cemetery. There, in the early morning of Edgar Allan Poe's birthday, a mysterious stranger known as the "Poe Toaster" will make his annual homage at the legendary poet's grave.

Only the Poe Toaster holds the key to the way between worlds. But great dangers lie ahead for Isobel. An ancient evil, draped in veils of white, is watching, challenging her for Varen's affections. When Isobel finally finds Varen, he is no longer the quiet and brooding boy who once captivated her, but a dark force, powerful and malevolent.

Could Isobel's greatest love also be her greatest adversary?

Enshadowed Details

Date : Published August 28th 2012 by Atheneum

ISBN : 9781442402072

Author : Kelly Creagh

Format : ebook 429 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Fantasy, Paranormal, Romance

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From Reader Review Enshadowed for online ebook

Mimi Valentine says

"Absence makes the heart grow fonder."

Maybe it's a little early to post my review for this, but I couldn't help it because this kind of love needs to be shared! **Enshadowed** isn't just about Varen and Isobel being together; it's about them being apart and fighting all the shadows — literally — to reunite. It's less about school life, more about the haunting dreamworld we only got a glimpse of in book one. In short: I loved **Nevermore**, but this installment just blew me away!

Some people may not be satisfied since Varen is mostly stuck in his dreamworld, struggling to return to Isobel, but I thought it was PERFECT. It shows, rather than tells, how much Isobel is willing to go through for him. The things she endures — like being tormented by dream monsters as well as real ones — all broke my heart like a recorded accident replaying over and over again on the news.

Isobel is my HERO. I love her so much! She's more than the beautiful blond cheerleader stereotype she was growing out of in **Nevermore**. She's sent tumbling into Varen's literal nightmare head first — with its horrifying shadows and monsters — but she still manages to right herself before she hits that harsh impact of a climax. Isobel is strong and determined and brave and so, so brilliantly written. Aching for her is mandatory, not an option!

But even though Varen isn't as present in Isobel's real life, he's still in her mind, her heart, her dreams, and her mirrors. They still make up one of my all-time favourite couples — not just because they trump the whole cheerleader-and-goth stereotype, but because their heart-wrenching and twisted journey proves how much they belong together.

Unable to resist, Isobel hugged the jacket close, rewarded with a scent that seized her heart like a clenched fist.

It smelled like him. God. It still smelled like him. (page 319 in the ARC)

Izzy's hilarious friend Gwen is back with all of her gothic quirkiness. And her dad also plays an important role in this book, as do her mother and adorable little brother Danny. You can see how much her family cares about her, and that's what makes watching Isobel claw through shadows so much harder.

With the beautifully dark storyline and Kelly Creagh's hauntingly dream-like writing, **Enshadowed** makes my favourites shelf right next to **Nevermore**! The ending just about broke me, unhinged me, and waiting for the next one is going to be torture — but I've already decided that waiting for anything that Kelly Creagh writes is well darn worth it!

BUY or BORROW?: Sometimes I wonder why I even ask this question. Buy for sure, please! ;)

-Mimi

So you can witness firsthand how beautiful the writing is, here's one of my favourite quotes! :)

"Is — is any of this real?" she asked. "Are you real?"

He lifted a hand to her cheek, his fingers brushing her jaw.

"Even if this is a dream," he whispered, "I'm not."

Isobel's eyes widened, recognizing those words as her own, the same ones she had once uttered to him. She reached for him, her arms twining around his neck, drawing him closer so his scent poured over her, that combination of incense, citrus, and dried leaves overriding the funeral funeral smell of the crowding flowers.

"Don't leave," she breathed.

"I'm here," he whispered. "Right here. Waiting." (page 16 in the ARC)

(Original review at Mimi Valentine's YA Review Blog)

Kenzie says

[when she had to leave him in the restaurant to go to the graveyard, that darn did nearly broke my heart for him. (h

TheBookSmugglers says

Originally Reviewed on The Book Smugglers

It has been an agonizing few months since Varen Nethers has disappeared - the rest of the world thinks that he, a misfit and outsider, has simply run away. But Isobel Lanley knows the truth - that Varen is trapped in the Dreamworld, tricked by creatures called Nocs and a beautiful, cruel demon named Lilith that reigns with deception and fear. Ever since losing Varen to the Dreamworld on Halloween, Isobel has grappled with her guilt and broken heart, and is a shadow of her former bubbly, carefree self. Plagued by nightmares and waking dreams in which she is haunted by Nocs, by Lilith, and even by Varen himself, Isobel finally musters up a haphazard plan to save the boy she loves. Her last hope is to travel to Baltimore and on the eve of Edgar Allan Poe's birthday, to visit Poe's grave and confront Reynolds - the infamous Poe Toaster, and the specter that can bridge the gap between Isobel's world and the realm of dreaming.

I'm gonna put on my sixth grade hat for a second to make this point: If you looked up the definition of "filler" in the dictionary (or on a wiki), you would find *Enshadowed* listed as a prime example. Creagh's second novel has a major case of Middle Book Syndrome (i.e. *The Empire Strikes Back*, this ain't).

To be blunt, nothing really happens in *Enshadowed*.

For the first 200 pages or so, heroine Isobel is (as one chapter title puts it) a 'shade of a shade' - she is an infuriatingly disengaged protagonist caught in a weird state of mental limbo, in which she can no longer function around her family or friends for whatever reason, and instead turns in on herself, giving up any pretense of trying to seem normal. Granted, she did lose her boyfriend and is being haunted by increasingly frequent apparitions, but Isobel's complete lack of effort to keep it together is more than a little...frustrating.

In fact, *frustrating* is the real key word for *Enshadowed*. For most of this book, I found myself incredibly frustrated with Isobel. Frustrated with her lack of thinking or planning (there are many moments of unparalleled idiocy in this novel on Isobel's part), frustrated with her tendency to keep secrets, frustrated with her disinterest in at least *attempting* to cover up her bizarre behavior. Most of all, it really bothered me that Isobel - for all that she feels guilty about putting her parents through hell - wouldn't *connect* (or even try to engage!) with a family that clearly loves and cares deeply for her. Is this out of character? Probably not, as I'm sure most folks (including myself) were not the best or most communicative teenagers. Still, to read the depths of despair to which Isobel has sank - all because of a boy she barely knows! - is a little grating. *Especially* considering how effective and compelling the relationship between Isobel and Varen was in *Nevermore* - the chemistry between the two characters, their differences, and their investment in each other. Unfortunately, this has vanished completely from the second book as Varen is nowhere to be seen. Instead, we have a hollowly disengaged Isabel, and a deluge of descriptive nightmares.

On the positive side, Kelly Creagh does have a way with words and has managed to write a nearly 500 page book that is, essentially, all description. And description of surrealist dreamscapes, no less (complete with spinning clocks and labyrinthine rose gardens and the like)! That's no small feat. She also manages to weave in more of the figure of Poe, his life and death (including the Poe Toaster) into the text, which is also handled deftly.

That said, reaching the end of the book only to discover that *nothing has really happened* over the course of this narrative makes for a frustrating reading experience. Minimal progress is made in the overarching arc of the trilogy (if any progress is made at all), and I ended the book exasperated with Isobel, confused with the novel's lackadaisical plotting, and sorely disappointed with the book's lack of meat and heart.

I might stick around to give book 3 a shot, but *Enshadowed*, for me, was a sad miss.

Stacia (the 2010 club) says

*"Side by side we'll fight the tide
That sweeps in to take us down
Hand in hand we'll both withstand
Even as we drown."*

I have this desire to want to dust off some Edgar Allan Poe and get lost for a little while after reading this second installment in the *Nevermore* series.

This was better than the first book because it didn't feel like the story was divided into two halves - the "before dreamworld" (realistic romantic fiction) and "after dreamworld" (paranormal horror) segments. *Enshadowed* felt more like one cohesive book, which made me appreciate it that much more. The funny thing is, even though so much of this book didn't have much going for the story other than Isobel being on

one big search to find someone, there was never a moment where it felt overworked or tedious, the way I'd felt the first book to be in parts (or a completely unnecessary effort like the second book in the Beautiful Creatures series was).

The beauty of *Enshadowed* was that there happened to be an effortless blending of the past and present, of the paranormal and the normal. I adored the greater addition of Poe's character into the story. I appreciated that the author brought into the story some of the mystery surrounding the *real* "grave visitor" who dedicated himself to Poe's memory every year.

If you are into this series, do a little digging online and see what you find. There's some interesting theorycrafting out there.

It's not often that you'll find a tale about a couple striving to be together which doesn't get bogged down in the telling of the romance. The spooky vibe of the story and eerie feeling of the atmosphere makes this an intriguing way of delivering the paranormal genre to an audience who isn't looking for yet another sappy love story. The characters are about as unique (and sometimes scary) as you'll find, and the lore is absolutely riveting.

After waiting two years for the chance to finally get to read part 2, I now get to wait impatiently for part 3. Boo for the wait, yay for another book!

Chelsea ♥Peril Please♥ says

Ahhhhhh this author is *killing* meeeee!! Why why whyyyyy do these things keep ending this way??? And the dreams...so damn terrifying. Though, I can't help but to love every minute of this mix of dream and reality, never knowing where Isobel is and what she needs to do to save Varen.

And Varen...what a lost, poor, tortured soul-His story is a sad and desperate one. One where no matter how hard Isobel tries, he sinks lower and lower, slipping farther from her grasp. I am so beyond invested in this story that it's sickening.

Consuming my every thought on vacation, including on the beach, I am lost within this story just as Varen and Isobel are. Lord help me. I don't think I can handle this lol.

WILL BE ADDING QUOTES TO EACH VACATION REVIEW WHEN I CAN, SO EXPECT EDITS

For more of my reviews, please visit:

Laura says

Memories. They are the cobwebs of the mind.

Not quite as good as the first book because it was very slow-paced in comparison, but I still enjoyed it a lot. The story world Creagh created is simply brilliant. I'm such a huge fan of Poe's stories and poems, and the way she brought them to life in this book is amazing.

*"Sleep now a little while
Till within our dreams we wake
Unfolding our Forever
If only for Never's sake."*

I love everything about the Nevermore series, from the characters to the writing and the world building. I'm especially fond of Pinfeathers and Reynolds because they are those kinds of characters where you never quite know where they stand, what they fight for, and whose side they're on. Mysterious and multi-layered, exactly how I like my characters.

And Varen! Granted, there wasn't nearly enough of him in this installment, which is definitely one of the reasons I didn't give 5 stars, but when he did show up - wow. I missed him so much and what happened to him broke my heart. Can we get book 1 version of him back, please??

A twilight version of reality

I would love to write a detailed review, gushing about the descriptiveness of the dreamworld, the gothic elements, the way you never quite know if what's happening is real or dream, but I'm honestly too impatient and need to start book 3, Oblivion, right now.

Give this series a try if you fancy <3

Melannie :) says

OH NO! D:

until 2012?!?!?!?!?!
whaaaaaaaaaaaaat?!

T_____T

Dude, it's TOO LONG.

I want to know what happens to Varen NOW.

And it better be GOOD.

He deserves some HAPPINESS.

go, Varen!

March 28, 2011:

seems like book #2 has a title!!
and a BEAUTIFLY AWESOME cover,
and a summary: Varen goes to THE DARK SIDE?!?!?!?

DDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDD:

I can't wait any longerrrrrrrrr *locks herself in mental sanatorium*

hayden says

I'm going to write this review in the form of a letter because I think Ms. Creagh deserves a letter because I LIKE LETTERS so here you go:

Dear Kelly Creagh,

I would tell you that I love you, but I'm not sure how tolerant you are of creepiness.

So, instead, I'll just tell you that Enshadowed made me cry and slobber and squeal and scream and also made me throw it across the room.

Maybe that'll be an adequate expression of my love for you, without me directly informing you of my predicament.

I began Enshadowed late one night, a while ago. I had just re-read Nevermore and I was anxious to see what was going to happen to our darling Isobel. See, unlike a lot of others, Isobel has always been one of my favorite characters. I'm not sure why, but she strikes a chord with me that is unfamiliar to other people. Varen is that way, too. When Nevermore ended, I felt like my insides had been ground up in a blender. Its sequel seemed so out-of-reach, so far away.

Receiving an ARC was like heaven. In my hands when I tore open the box was the sequel to my favorite story, probably ever.

I know, the goth and the cheerleader has been so overdone. But Creagh writes the story so well, and makes it so believable, that I had no other option but to fall in love with it.

In Enshadowed, we are where we left off in the first book. Isobel is grieving and reliant on her best friend, Gwen (who happens to be my favorite character in the book). She has many clever lines throughout the book. One thing that will please people about Enshadowed is that the book is substantially shorter, only 429 pages. Nevermore was 543, which brought about a lot of complaints. I never really understood them, but to each their own, huh?

*I don't want to give too much away about Enshadowed, because the book isn't due in stores for another almost two months, but what I can say is that I loved every second of it and **I CAN'T WAIT FOR THE THIRD.***

Yes, Kelly. I am insinuating something.

*Love (Unless You Have a Problem With That),
Hayden // The Teen Bookworm*

Dear Enshadowed,
If you could come out tomorrow, I would love you forever and stuff.
Love,
Hayden <3

The Next Day

Dear Enshadowed,
You didn't come out today, so I'm mad at you.
Mad,
Hayden <3

The Day After

Dear Enshadowed,
I've gotten over the anger I pointed toward you. Can you forgive me?
Love,
Hayden <3

The Day After, Again

Dear Enshadowed,
I miss you. When will I get to see your pretty face?
Love,
Hayden <3

Every Day Up Until August 28, 2012

Dear Enshadowed,
I'm going to go wallow in self-pity about the fact that I don't have you yet.
Love,
Hayden 3

Anzu The Great Destroyer says

The Poe Toaster.

Oh wait, I have an even better one!

Don't give me that look. I'm sure I'm not the only one who imagined this.

Starting *Enshadowed* was a huge mistake. And before you go all berserk on me, no I don't mean that it's a bad book. On the contrary, it's a very good book. What actually made me say this is the ending. That god forsaken ending. Then again, *Nevermore* had a frustrating ending as well, so I guess I should have seen it coming.

What bothered me about the ending, besides the obvious things - those who have read the book know what things I'm talking about - is the fact that book three will be out in fucking 2013. 2013. What the hell? That seems like a lifetime away.

Why couldn't I wait until all three books are out, and then start the series? Why? Because *Nevermore* was too tempting. Now look at me paying the price. Enjoy watching me beg and suffer.

Buy it. Join the suffering.

The reason why I'm not giving it five stars is Varen's absence. Isobel is great, but not great enough to cover up his absence. The story was also lacking at some points. Too much parenting going on, not enough magic. This got me a bit bored.

And the ending. That fucking ending. Someone please hand me a gun.

Review also posted on

Read #1: 23rd - 25th Nov 2012

Read #2: 30th - 31st Jul 2015

Liz says

Despite everything Isobel is determined to bring Varen back. Despite the fact that those around her turn their backs on her, despite the horror and the danger she is willing to risk everything.

Her family eyes her with suspicion, her old friends mock her, her new found friend is horrified by the dark and ancient creature Varen awoke and Isobel herself does often not know whether what happens is real or nothing but a dream.

She finds herself between the worlds. She finds herself on the edge of sanity. And step by step she reveals more and more of Varen's inner world.

“That a single kiss from a boy who knew how to walk through dreams, who himself now seemed to be a dream, hadn't irrevocably altered her.”

I thought that the first book was dark, but it was nothing compared to this one.

Isobel had to deal with a lot in *Enshadowed*. Firstly, there was her father whom I honestly found unbearable with his obsession. He did not understand Isobel at all so it was just natural that she refused being honest with him. Her mother wasn't any better so the only light in her family was Danny who again saved Isobel several times and acted in an adorable way far more mature than Isobel herself sometimes.

Secondly, there was the school and squad problems. Isobel messed things seriously up.

She was depressed and lost and confused and sometimes even a little bit insane, but it wasn't an excuse. She wasn't thinking and she payed for it. And the price was high, probably a bit too high.

And last but not least, there was the dream problem. I honestly did not know when she was asleep and when she was awake myself.

It was disturbing, it was dark and frightening.

The demons, the haunting song that send shivers down my spine and then of course Pinfeathers.

I was confused. I both loved and hated him, until the turning point. One of many, actually. Then something in my head clicked and my heart stopped. Just like that. The revelation was...**shattering**.

I loved how Isobel proved her love for Varen over and over.

I loved just how far she was ready to go for him, it was so true and it was indeed so much more than just love. It was moving and real and bittersweet.

The things about him she discovered were sad and beautiful and often I found myself with tears in the eyes. Varen is an incredibly deep character. Much deeper than any other YA-book character.

**“I keep telling myself
That you're
just a girl.
Another leaf blown across my path
Destined to pass on
And shrivel into yourself
Like all the others.
Yet despite my venom
You refuse to wither
Or fade.
You remain golden throughout,
And in your gaze I am left to wonder if it is me alone
Who feels the fall.”**

He is lost. In all the ways. Isobel is his light. A light that did everything to get him back in this book, but the punch in the end was hard and it left me breathless. I don't know how I will survive until the release of the third book.

And if it...oh my...I don't even want to think about the third book and the ending of it.

I loved the haunting and dark write style, it really reminded me on Poe's stories. The same mysterious and tensed atmosphere.

I loved the characters and their relationships, their dialogues. Every single gaze, every single thought was

important. It was connected, everything was.

This book mirrored the deep loneliness of Varen and the closeness to the edge of Isobel. It was heart-breaking and intoxicating. Everything about it and in some ways I love this book even more than *Nevermore*. It is definitely worth reading and even re-reading despite all the darkness and pain in it.

Annabelle Marie Veronica says

*****FINAL RATING: 4.30 STARS*****

CATCHALL

I loved *Nevermore*. Most of you probably know that. I thought it was a seriously awesome book with one of the most original plot concepts I'd ever seen. Plus, I happen to be something of an Edgar Allan Poe addict—I have the complete collection to prove it. Anything Poe, I probably have an answer for. But oh! Moving on. I don't think I enjoyed *Enshadowed* as much as I did *Nevermore* mostly because I missed Varen. Even so, I definitely loved this book.

THE HEROINE

ISOBEL

In the first book, I was with the group who thought Isobel was singularly brainless. She was always making dumb choices when she really should've known better, and missed a lot of obvious things. But I do think she improves somewhat in *Enshadowed*. She's still not a genius, but she's definitely steeping up. Isobel has a lot of determination and she always holds onto her hope. Even when things look difficult, she still wants to find a way. And though she dwells on the past often, I think we all would, and the emotion that's captured there is very potent.

THE LOVE INTEREST

VAREN

Oh, Varen. I missed him so much in this book! We hardly see any of him, and most of what we do see of him is twisted and wrong. He's ins't like that, or he shouldn't be. But that's how he is now. Harder. Cruel. But we do see that he still has feelings, and as far as I'm concerned it's clear that he loves Isobel.

THE BEST FRIEND

GWEN

Gwen is a really, really good friend in this book, just like in the first one. She has a little bit of a freak-out where she will abandon Isobel for a bit, but the important part is that he goes back. She's such a good friend that she'll even almost go against what she believes in just to help her. Gwen is a really awesome character in that way, even though she frequently annoys me.

THE PLOT

So now we come to the plot! Probably the best part about this plot is that it is original. I've read so many dystopians and historical fictions and even PNRs that are Exactly. The. Same. So of course it was refreshing to get a continuation to this series, finally, after two years.

Isobel will do anything to reach Varen, even if it means lying to her parents and disobeying the rules. She's desperate, and she needs to keep her promise to him for both of them. I love the dedication that's there.

And it's not an easy journey. Isobel tries to do her best, but we're all human. Along the way, she messes a few things up. And some of the things that she says come back to haunt her, whether or not she really meant them.

It wasn't what I'd call fast-paced, but it also wasn't dragged out for ridiculous amounts of time, which I was grateful for. The pacing was overall satisfying although there were one or two parts that I felt could have been cut. Still, overall, wonderful.

Enshadowed had me hooked from page one and left me unable to put the book down. It was too intriguing and too amazing!

THE ROMANCE

There's not a whole lot of romance in this book, since Isobel and Varen are basically separated for the majority of the book. And what I like the most it's that it's easy to see that they love each other. That's especially clear in what Isobel is willing to do for Varen. Varen is difficult to figure out because of his being changed, but there's a very defining moment in his epilogue that really makes everything clear. And if I hadn't been tearing up, I might've swooned.

THE WRITING

Kelly has seriously some of the most gorgeous writing ever. The third person is done artfully and it's easy to feel connected to Isobel, especially since she now has a brain. It's awesome. Her description is peerless. Really. And it's everywhere. She describes things completely thoroughly and so vividly that it's impossible not to be able to picture it. Furthermore, her usage of Poe is less in this book than in the first one, but it's still done very clearly and gorgeously.

THE ENDING

Ah, the ending. I mean, the plot itself is in a similar place at the end as in the beginning, but it's also very different because of what occurred. Isobel took a lot of risks and made a lot of sacrifices to find Varen, and I'm sure that the choices he made will change what she does next. And Varen...well, Varen is going through some serious conflict and self-loathing at the end of the book. A lot happened in these pages.

WRAPUP

I absolutely without a doubt loved this book, and if you loved Nevermore, I suggest that you pick this one up ASAP! It's an awesome continuation of Isobel and Varen's story and it's chock-full of some major emotional moments. I love all the Poe allusions and the concept is definitely one of the more original I've come across. I'll definitely be picking up the third and last book in this trilogy eagerly!

FINE.

Find more of my reviews on Sparkles and Lightning!

-

I want this book now, and oh, the cover is *so* gorgeous!

I'm gonna have a drama queen moment right now, just so you know.

WHY DOES THE RELEASE DATE OF THIS BOOK KEEP GETTING PUSHED BACK?!?!?!?

WHHHYYYYYY?!?!? WHY DOES EVERYTHING ALWAYS HAPPEN TO
MEEEEEEEEEEE???????? IT'S NOT FAAAAIIIIIRRRRRRR!!!!!!!! NOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!

But in all seriousness, why *does* the date keep getting pushed back?

Janina says

I have to admit that my excitement to read this has been dampened considerably by the long wait and the reviews I've read so far ... but lets see.

Ari says

This book was beautifully confusing and frustrating.

FULL REVIEW:

Enshadowed is one of those stories that can simply leave you breathless and exhausted from so much beauty. I kept turning pages furiously inhaling every word and, even in the moments when there was no actual action, my elevated heart-rate made me feel like I was reading the most exhilarating of the books. In a way I was... because this story is awesomely intriguing and confusing, even though also terribly frustrating.

Now I need to think. I need to understand. If Kelly wanted to leave us in that insurmountable darkness that she wrote about... well she pretty much succeeded.

I am in some sort of state of awe. I have now even more questions than before and I am stuck not knowing what might come next.

To put it simple:

The story is beautiful and it reveals so many wonderful details about Varen, his dream world, Poe, Reynolds and so much more. Isobel's searching for a way to bring Varen back, her dreams, her struggle all these were so.. palpable. I love it when I can feel a story, when it gets to the bottom of my heart, when I can connect with the characters, when I get to care for them. Yes, I needed more interaction with Varen, but even in his absence I could savor this story as much as I did with the first one. The book is more descriptive compared to Nevermore, but still there was a lot happening, keeping me on the edge from the first page to the very last one.

Note that the synopsis is a bit deceiving; it leaves you thinking that their encounter will be the major conflict in this story, but somehow that is not really the case, as it was all too quick, quite painful and pretty much confusing - all at once.

The Writing:

I love Kelly's beautiful prose, the entertaining dialogue, the wonderful descriptions, the humorous scenes; also her sassiness and wittiness and the darkness of the dream world... Not to mention how well crafted the characters are (Kelly can make you care even for the bad guys... imagine that!).

Not having the romance in the middle of the story (view spoiler) we could concentrate more on the beautiful details of this vivid dream world (which is not as confusing as before, but still just as mysterious). Its darkness and fuzziness makes you dizzy, you search for connections between the elements hidden inside it, you try to remember if you've read about them in the previous book, all the pieces seem to fit, but you still can't see the whole picture... It's crazy how you keep running in circles, enjoying the ride even when you realize it. It's crazy how dreams can keep mixing with reality until you have a hard time distinguishing one from the other (view spoiler)

You know, I wonder if at night, after writing this book, Kelly ever looked into the mirror and expected to see someone else next to her own reflection.

The characters:

Kelly knows how to make you feel part of a family, because finally (in a paranormal story) family is not dysfunctional: they care for each other, they give advices, and they try to help.

Isobel's parents were full of concern, trying so hard to understand her even though she kept so many secrets. Her little brother was as sweet as I remembered him. There were some funny family moments and even some that involved Isobel's best friend Gwen, who is the best friend in the world (also witty, caring, funny, and what's most important – always there for Isobel).

I have some questions about some characters (Brad, Gwen's grandparents, the teacher, Varen's parents, Reynolds... and if I keep thinking, probably about all the others too, so I'll end the list here). We've discovered some things, but there are many others hidden from view and I can only hope to unravel them in the next book.

Last page impression:

There is one word that could describe my feelings: shock!

Reading the last chapters I couldn't stop wondering 'what the hell just happened?'

The ending is as open as the clear blue sky and I simply don't know where this all is headed. It seems as all the doors have been closed and I am not sure how this story will unfold.

Somehow it made no sense, but maybe that's the beauty of this story – this mystery that followed us until the end.

Let's talk some more:

This should be some conclusion of some sort, but I am still confused and I don't even know where I want to go with this review. It feels incomplete, but maybe that's OK because the story is like that as well.

I feel the need to tell you that I loved this story to pieces. I really did.

As hopelessly frustrated as I am now, I embrace this feeling because it also feels good.

I do realize that I have more questions now than when I finished Nevermore. It's like we took a few steps back rather than forward, but ...

Did I enjoy it?

Did I love it?

Do I keep thinking about it?

Does it make me want to read the next book really, really badly?

Yes, yes, yes..Yes!

Favorite quotes:

- ☞ *"I'm here," he whispered. "Right here. Waiting."*
- ☞ *"Dreaming aside," he went on, "how can you be so sure your world is the real one?"*

PS: I forgot to mention what a great movie this story would make. I saw it all playing in my head while reading the book, it would have wonderful effects (the dream world in this series is fascinating) and it would be creepily beautiful.

Happy midnight reading and.. Sweet Nightmares!

** This review can also be found at ReadingAfterMidnight.com*

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Notes from 29 aug 2012

I need to think, to bang my head against the wall and see what's that I've missed and then come back with a proper review. And if you wonder, yes, the image from the beginning of the review describes a scene from the story (not a spoiler as I think it can be found at the very beginning). Dreams will never be the same again.

Notes from before reading:

I CAN'T WAIT for this book!!!

Another later edit:

Some more waiting?!

Later Edit:

Well, 24th Jan isn't that bad either, it's close enough :))

I love the cover and I still can't wait for it to get out

First edit:

2012? ... Pff, but I want to read it now :|

Make it **Jan 19 2012** and that's the perfect date :D

Jillian -always aspiring- says

Some thoughts (in place of a review for now): *Enshadowed* is a suitable sequel with some delightfully creepy moments, but while I was reading it I honestly felt it could have been *more*. This is not a story about a girl saving a boy or even about two lovers trying to save each other: this is the story of a girl's mental, emotional, and physical undoing as her sanity is stretched beyond ordinary bounds in her attempts to rescue the boy she loves. In the face of the current YA market (where almost everything profitable seems to be a glorified love story on some level), *Enshadowed* is bold for what it does and doesn't do -- but is it satisfying? I'm still not sure. Also curious is how Creagh will tie all the loose ends in just one more book. Can she do it? I'm looking forward to seeing if she can.

Krys says

Two years ago I read a book that really made me happy - *Nevermore* by Kelly Creagh. I enjoyed the world that Creagh constructed, the conflict and the characters. I waited... Book 2, entitled *Enshadowed*, was announced. I waited... Time went by and more people found this book. We waited...

Last week an ARC of the sequel was sent to my home by the fine folks at Simon and Schuster. I squealed aloud. And I might have danced a little. The wait was over.

I knew that immediately leaping into book two would be a terrible idea. It had been far too long since I read the first book. I had forgotten many of the details and I have had a lot of trouble with sequels for that exact reason lately. *Nevermore* lost little of its polish the second read through. The Dream World still confuses and irritates me but the rest of the book is so flawless I can still overlook that. For that reason I was hoping that Creagh didn't ground book two in the Dream World... and, thankfully, she did not!

Enshadowed picks up shortly after the climax of *Nevermore*. Things haven't been the same for Isobel since she discovered the existence of the Dream World - or of the Nocs. Now, with Varen lost to them both she must pull out all of the stops to retrieve him. With Reynolds absent and Pinfeathers dogging her every move Isobel puts her hope in the hands of the mysterious Poe Toaster, a once a year phenomenon of mythic proportions. She suspects that Varen is connected to him and she wants to confront him in order to find her lost love.

This book had more flow than the first one. I attribute this to the fact that Creagh spent less time in the Dream World than book one. I am so grateful for this change in plot. I love the inclusion of the Nocs and the mythos surrounding them. However, it makes for a jarring read that is hard to follow if it's not done precisely. In this book those transitions were much better. Besides that Creagh added a new plot element to this one that was simply epic. And I can't tell you what it is without spoiling the whole damn book for you. And you would be mad at me if I did that.

As with book one there was a good chunk of buildup to the big dramatic moment in this book. Before that is Isobel adjusting to her new life without Varen. I found this to be very well done on Creagh's part. Isobel is far more fleshed out in this one. She allowed her character to explore the stages of grief and hopelessness and fear. I even liked the fact that Isobel's eating habits alter so severely because of her sorrow. It really

helps to lend gravity to the situation at hand. You can really feel and see what is happening to her.

The ending of this book... wow... the ending. Can I have book 3 now please?

4.5 out of 5 stars. I hope book 3 does not take as long to release.

- review courtesy of www.bibliopunkkreads.com

Judith (Judith'sChoiceReads) says

*This is how I felt **before** reading this book:*

"How am I expected to wait that long?? FML, someone should change the date to this year NOW. Not to sound crazy, but I Need My Varen!!! >.<"

...And this is how I feel now:

I almost feel like crying. This doesn't seem fair, that the sequel to such a great debut should fall so flat; I almost don't know what to feel, it's all a mess of disappointment, sadness and confusion. What do you do when something you've waited for with such high anticipation and delight just leaves you hollow?

Goodreads Summary

True love takes a twisted turn in the second book of this modern gothic romance trilogy channeling the dark brilliance of Edgar Allan Poe. While Varen remains a prisoner in a perilous dream world where the terrifying stories of Edgar Allan Poe come to life, Isobel travels to Baltimore to confront the dark figure known throughout the world as the Poe Toaster. This man, the same man who once appeared to Isobel in her dreams and abandoned her in Varen's nightmare world, holds the key to saving Varen.

But when Isobel discovers a way to return to this dream world, she finds herself swept up in a realm that not only holds remnants of Edgar Allan Poe's presence, but has also now taken on the characteristics of Varen's innermost self. It is a dark world of fear, terror, and anger.

When Isobel once more encounters Varen, she finds him changed. And now Isobel must face a new adversary—one who also happens to be her greatest love.

The Review

Enshadowed by Kelly Creagh strikes me as being an utterly absurd book. In some cases, it brings new meaning to the word, "filler," solidifying my idea that there really is such a thing as "curse of the second" in terms of book series and their sequels.

The book, following the preface, begins with a dream. Isobel, being in the middle of practising for Nationals

with her cheer squad, is interrupted when none other than Mr. Nethers appears. They go off together, only to have a strange interaction, and before Varen leaves, he imparts a very eerie message, one I will NOT spoil. As the dream closes to an end, Isobel wakes to...life without Varen. Christmas is around the corner, we even have snow ~~but where I'm from, that white stuff is all annual~~, and it is revealed that nothing much has happened since we last left off. Like **nothing**. I use the word very literally because aside from inheriting the Dark One's moodiness, Isobel really isn't on a set path to finding Varen, let alone bringing him home. She has an *idea* of what *could* happen, providing that her very concerned parents do not lock her up in asylum before said plans materialize. Still, she isn't 100% on the exact details for Operation:Bust Varen from Clutches of Evil Demoness. Nope, we're still working out the bugs on that one.

Now, if I was Varen - or anyone trapped with Lilith, for that matter - I would be more than a little pissed. Maybe it was the overall pacing or the fact that the word "development" wasn't relative to Enshadowed's story-line at all. Isobel looked like a pouty, angsty, teenager; whining, but doing nothing about the problems in terms of solving them.

Yeah...

Listen up, I get that you miss Varen, ~~I've missed him more probably these past months~~, but...can you LIVE a little?! Seriously, Isobel has a loving family, the most adorable little brother, and while they'd all give the world for her; she just cuts them out of her life completely.

Isobel: "Ah, life is so meaningless without Varen!"

Very Confused Readers of *Nevermore* and now *Enshadowed*: *blinks* Were you always this annoying? Tell me you weren't always this annoying.

Yep, the death of one of my favourite characters just happened!

Her dad and mom kept trying for her to connect. **Danny** tried. Isobel wouldn't budge. And while I used to adore this coupling, hers and Varen, their relationship started to look a lot like every other PRN/YA out there where the lead heroine loses the love of her pubescent life, consequently slipping into manic depression. I couldn't stand this happening, not with Isobel and certainly not because of Varen. Because they were both *better* than this, or at least I thought so.

The only thing this book gets points for are its side-characters, Brad (believe it or not), Danny, Gwen, and Isobel's mom and her dad. The writing was pretty, but ultimately didn't take the reader anywhere. I could handle reading about a depressed protagonist **if** being inside her head did not make me feel depressed also. The only thing that got our little cheerleader acting lively was Varen, any mention or memory of him and she gained about a zap's worth of energy. Not that she did anything useful with this energy, mind you.

And as you can imagine, this source of restoration got old pretty fast. Isobel's perception of Varen suddenly took a turn for the worse; he became the 'tortured artist' and 'misunderstood,' giving the whole thing an awkward hero-worship quality. I became sceptical of him, disliking Varen to an extent when ordinarily I wouldn't have. The whole mess with Lilith...it was **his** fault.

Varen failed to connect appropriately with humanity, and hence, he sought the understanding companionship

of a soul-sucking banshee. Go figure! The problem here is not that he is being made to face the consequences of his actions, but rather that Isobel seems utterly **blind** to him being at fault at all. She wants to stop Lilith from hurting anyone ever again, but what if they, like Varen, *want* her summoned? What then!?

Isobel : "Varen was tricked, and Lilith, she corrupted him!"

Every Reader, and I, who read *Enshadowed* and head-desked on a grand scale post-and during-the read. : "Sure, sweetheart. Hey, show me that pretty somersault of yours. Yes?"

This was absolutely unbelievable. That my intelligent, witty, Isobel would put aside rational thought, reason, to defend the Great Varen Nethers; there was just no point to it, like none at all. Whichever way you look at it, he is responsible for whatever's happening to him. Her denial of his involvement, more than anything, made her look stupid. You cannot seek to resolve anything by hiding or avoiding the truth; someone should have told Isobel.

Now...to his Darkship: what the hell **happened** to you?? Frick, man, you were on a *roll*; people loved you, America's *ovaries* were in your favour!! And then you went and ruined it. I don't know/care if the tool committing that heinous act at the end of this book was *you* or just a *Noc*, but, that my friend was absolutely unacceptable. NO OVARIES FOR YOU. I am kind of royally ticked off about this, Kelly Creagh would have been better off never writing you (Varen) into this sequel and just sticking with the endless - and somehow elegant - prose of description.

Listen up Varen, you should file a character-complaint or something in the underworld's court of justice - that is, if Lilith will allow you - because you, my friend, have officially been victim to a total massacre. It will take a lot to win back this reader, I feel let down by this series. Maybe I should have just stuck to re-reading Nevermore and foregone Enshadowed, I would have been happier.

Major Problems

- The writing was endless, almost 430 pages worth, but there wasn't an actual story, nor substance.
- Somebody mentioned that Gwen almost became a plot device, but luckily I stopped reading before then. At first she was my Batman, saving the world/reading experience of this book for the masses, until I realized that Isobel's role was being greatly overshadowed by Gwen. Isobel is the main protagonist, and while she *is* there, her presence failed to accomplish anything by me.
- A chunk of pages at the beginning should have been sacrificed, if only to start the book off right, preferably when the action begins in Baltimore.

Final Thoughts

I leave Enshadowed thinking badly of both Isobel and Varen, even considering if the final instalment in this series will be worth the anticipation wasted on this second novel. This was a hard review to write, but if the next book is anything like this one, I'm thinking that maybe placing a hold for it at the library instead of pre-ordering a copy might be a better decision. I am safely disappointed, and I have said it before, but I'll say it again, this was not the sequel I waited almost a year for.

1.5/5 stars

Keli says

2.5

Oh how I wanted to enjoy this book...

Yes, I am shocked at what I have just read...and I don't even...just, what?!

First of all, I should clarify this book is not getting a low-rating because of anything that has to do with the writing. I think Creagh is a terrific writer, as expressed in both *Nevermore* and *Enshadowed*, and she doesn't let a sentence go by without decent explanations. So there.

But that's pretty much the only thing GOOD about this book.

Nevermore was fantastic. It didn't suffer from that "Girl-Meets-Boy-And-Five-Seconds-Later-They-Want-To-Have-Babies" syndrome. It, for me, had a good balance of romance (f you wanna call it that), humor, creepiness, and than, of course, Poe.

However, in this book, all those good qualities I just covered seemed to somehow spontaneously combust.

--(If you haven't read the first book, beyond this point will be detrimental to your reading experience!!)--

The jacket-flap or any description I've read for this book is completely WRONG. Here is a description that should be used instead:

"Isobel, a once decent person, has since returned to being a whiny-bitchy-annoying cheerleader, who spends her days moping around. Occasionally, she'll do something interesting, like talk to her Dad. Which their conversations are always extremely relevant to that of the plot. Also, if we're lucky, she's visited by Gwen, a character who was once very interesting but in this book fills the 'weird-best-friend-who-knows-everything-and-is-basically-a-space-filler' characteristic. After about 400 pages of that, something finally happens, but even when stuff 'finally happens' nothing really happens. And then Isobel finds Varen...1 page later...nothing happens again...and the book then ends leaving you in complete suspense even though the nothingness that had just occurred for 430 fucking pages doesn't exactly lead to any sorta of climax that is worthy of being deemed 'suspenseful'."

So yeah, someone send that to the *Nevermore-Books-Publishing-People*.

No but seriously, that's the best description I can actually give this book. In *Nevermore*, I felt there was an arch to the story, a bridge, if you will. A path the reader could take behind the story with just the right smattering of everything else enjoyable. This book lacked the one necessary thing to a book: an actual plot. Which is the last thing I would have suspected from Kelly Creagh.

With all the things she could have done...I think, WHY THIS?! The ending of this book is no different from the ending of the 1st, all the characters are basically in the same position as last time (except for Isobel) and to be honest, I don't really care anymore. Isobel got so goddamned annoying, Gwen got so goddamned annoying, there were basically no other characters in this book. You learn virtually nothing more about Reynolds, and the stuff you do find out isn't even explained or useful to the "plot" and then there's

Pinfeathers who was a cool character but oops...he ended proving to be an absolutely worthless character. And Varen? Psh. He only appears FOR REAL for roughly the length of a small paragraph...

And the one thing I thought was supposed to pull these books along: Poe, seemed to be completely absent from this book. His importance slimmed down to an absolute minimum, and you learn nothing more about his life or how it relates to the little information the author concocted out of this mess.

Well there.

I did it.

And I feel unhappy with myself...

I will read the 3rd book...but my expectations for it have officially lowered to something embarrassingly low.

Keertana says

Enshadowed is a disaster; pure, terrifying, earth-shattering literary disaster, hurling your way at velocities too fast to imagine. Ever since I finished *Nevermore*, I've been dutifully stalking Kelly Creagh's website for any mention of a sequel; a release date, a cover, a *summary*. Thus, on August 28th when I finally held *Enshadowed* in my hands, I was breathless, shaking, and oh-so-very excited. Well, talk about a slap back into reality because it took me nearly five months to read *Enshadowed*. Yes, you read that right - *five months*.

If you look up "frustrating" "slow" "dull" "meaningless" or just "Middle Book Syndrome" in the dictionary, *this* will be the book cover next to those words. In the future, if I ever say a novel suffered from MBS, slap me and direct me to this review, because there is not even *one* book in the world that suffers from it as much as this one does. Not. One. What I'm trying to say here is that *nothing* happens in *Enshadowed*. Absolutely. Nothing.

Creagh's sophomore novel picks up directly where her debut left off, which is possibly its first flaw. You see, this series is not meant to be a trilogy - there isn't enough material for that. Instead, it's really just a duo, but Creagh has a talent for writing long, beautiful and languid phrases, rich with description and detail - so much so that it takes up this entire novel. For 70% of the story we are treated to Isobel as she sees visions, wanders through life shell-shocked from the events of the past Halloween and grieves Varen. In the last 30%, we are treated to a sudden shift into action, into what we *think* is answers but we learn is just a solid dose of confusion. In fact, I can't even summon up enough emotion to feel irritated by *yet another* cliffhanger ending - I think I'm just too happy I finally finished this.

You see, the problem with *Enshadowed* is that there is *too much* of the wrong thing and *too little* of the right thing. Over half of this novel is dedicated to character development, gradually building Isobel's relationship with her parents and charting its changes as Varen's disappearance is prolonged. Out of all the people in the world, I am most probably one of the strongest supporters for character development, but character development without plot is a tragic flaw. Isobel simply pushes aside her parents well-wishes, she does exactly what she wants and makes no effort to conceal her new sense of insanity from those around her. If I

could have, I would have gone in and just strangled Isobel. Not only was she extremely disappointing as a character, but *nothing happened!* If *Enshadowed* had started out from Isobel reaching Baltimore, as she vowed in the end of *Nevermore*, and giving us flashbacks, building up the familial relationships that Creagh so obviously found important, perhaps then this would have been a better novel. Perhaps.

If all of that didn't sound bad enough - no plot, frustrating characters, too much character development, confusing visions that did *nothing* for the story - then it all just gets worse with Isobel constantly moping. *Nevermore* perfectly captured the tense, tender, and enriching relationship that Isobel and Varen shared, but *Enshadowed* reduces that into an Isabella-Swan-esque pining. I kid you not. Sure, perhaps Isobel isn't running out to dive from cliffs to see visions of Varen, but she's not doing anything a whole lot safer either.

Now, looking back, I can fully admit that the only reason this novel is getting two stars and not one - or *zero* - is because of Gwen, Isobel's best friend, Danny, Isobel's brother, and Isobel's parents herself. Considering that character development ruined this story, at least those characters shone and I enjoyed some parts of this tale, particularly Isobel's relationship with her parents, brother, and friend. While I do firmly believe that this could have all been condensed, at least into a novella if not just a final installment, at least *Enshadowed* has strong characters and beautiful writing to offer it some type of absolution.

I will, without a doubt, be reading the last novel. It is, after all, the last book; the one with all the answers that I wish this one had; the one where something will actually *happen* and not just drag on like a filler. Nevertheless, I won't be making the same mistake twice. I won't be checking Creagh's website anytime soon, I won't be pre-ordering the last novel, and I will keep my expectations so ridiculously low that there is no possible way I *can* be disappointed. If you haven't read *Enshadowed* yet, take my advice and skip to Chapter 25. Everything that is worth knowing about this book happens in the last ten chapters and if you want to know everything else, just go back and start from the beginning; it's too much of an effort to read this all the way through. Trust me, I know - I did, after all, struggle with this for five months.

You can read this review and more on my blog, Ivy Book Bindings.

Dinjolina says

2012?

2012????!!!!

I feel sick.

(2012!)

Edit: Oh! A cover! :titters:

Errrrrrrm....why is this guy more ugly than the one on the first book? :/

Edit No.2:

Yeah. I don't really remember book one any more. And if there is book 3...gosh, what will be first? The end of the trilogy or the end of the world?

This will sound harsh, but, who needs two years to write and edit a book who's backbone you had to already

have (seeing as how you sold the idea to a publisher)?

I mean, it's not like you are writing a Russian classic. It's just a silly YA book. It could be glam, but in the end, it's mostly a shallow teen bed time story with a bit of Edgar Allan Poe thrown in.

Mizuki says

For book 1 Nevermore, see my review here: <http://www.goodreads.com/review/show/...>

Edited@17/09/2016: thoughts after re-reading:

I have been re-reading this trilogy, and after this round of re-reading, I can appreciate Ms. Creagh's imaginary even more than before. Although some parts of the story and some of the MC's action are still frustrating to me, yet I now find a new favorite character: Pinfeather! He is such a sweetheart! ^_^

And I just can't resist pimping my fanart a little:

Edited@18/10/2013

Today I finished a fanart for Enshadowed:

I had just turned the last page...and right now I'm feeling a lot of things at once...

I want to scream.

I want to cry out "NO DON'T DO THAT TO ME!"

(Yes, I took this picture from someone else's review)

I was amazed by how Ms. Creagh ended her second book.

I love her writing and her plot twists.

I keep wishing I could write like her.

But I also want to wrap my hands around her throat and squeeze for ending the book like THIS.

Enshadowed is not what I have expected, but it isn't like I can't see the ending coming...although it *really* isn't the ending I would like to see.

(Link: <http://vampirekiki.deviantart.com/art...>)

No no no no no noooooo!!! Please don't do this, Ms. Creagh!

It has been a long since I'd last became so emotional over a book.

The book isn't without flaws, for most of the time the suspense keeps building up as Isobel being haunted by illusions and her own dreams, but when all these build-ups reach the climax, the book has already reached its end.

Plus, Isobel is still very slow and she is as poorly researched about Poe as she was in book 1. I mean, she is now on a quest to save Varen, but how could she not even bother to look more closely at Poe's works, his life and his mysterious death in order to look for answers!?

To be 100% honest, Isobel's **Do Not Do The Research** flaw is once again getting into my nerve. Now she realized Varen's fate was tied to Poe and his works, *then why didn't Isobel start getting her hands on every Poe-related material already in order to get some answer!?* I never see her burying her nose into Poe's novels, I never see her looking up Google or Wiki to look for details of Poe's life and his mysterious death. NOTHING. *sighs*

Through out reading the book, the beautiful, gothic images of my beloved Italian old schooled horror films keep surfacing in my mind...

I love how Ms. Creagh descried the shadowy, ghostly villain Lilith, the scenes with her are as scary as the scene when Anna first showing up in Anna Dressed In Blood.

A scene from Mario Bava's Black Sunday. This actress can very well be Lilith.^^

And in the end Varen became a guy who mourned the death of the lovely girl he loved---just like so many of Poe's male leads.

Now I'm desperately waiting for the next book. What will Isobel do next?!?
