



The Wounded Shadow

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The kings and queens of the northern continent lay siege to the Darkwater Forest, desperate to contain its evil. But rumors of gold and aurium have lured deserters and the desperate into its shadow, creating a growing army held in its sway. Desperate after the death and dissolution of their greatest ally, Willet and the Vigil seek the truth of what lies at the heart of the evil they face. They delve the mind of an old enemy and find an answer far worse than they could have imagined.

Danger stalks the cities of the north, striking at the rulers of the kingdoms. As Willet and the rest of the Vigil seek to find answers, the group is scattered with an ever-growing darkness around them. Will they discover a path to keep their land safe, or will an ancient evil reclaim the world it once called its own?

The Wounded Shadow Details

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From Reader Review The Wounded Shadow for online ebook

Robinn says

This book is amazing! I have been waiting for it since I finished "The Shattered Vigil!!" I'm fairly new to Mr Carr's books, but have loved all of them! This one was certainly worth waiting for and I love it as much as the others, if not more! I really like that there isn't any sex beyond first base - yet another good thing about reading books written by a fellow Christian! These books led me to look into other Christian fantasy authors' works and so far, so good! I really loathe graphic sex and violence. It just isn't necessary and would have ruined these books for me.

This book was non-stop action! It is told from three points of view, which can be a bit confusing at times. It's necessary, however, because each of them travel in very different directions from the others.

It was like being there with each of the three main characters (in all three books). I really don't care for Toria Deel, but she is like a real person, quirks and all. It speaks well for Mr Carr that I got involved enough with the characters to know that she wasn't a person I would want for a friend.

Of course, Willet was my favorite! I have enjoyed his adventures through all three books. It was so much fun when he got the opportunities to put people in their place! Good detective, too. He is truly a good person. He has faults, too, which makes him so real.

Pellin annoyed me at times, but he really wanted to do the best he could, both for the group and for the people of the northern continent. Even when I wanted to smack him upside the head, I admired that he wasn't swayed from his beliefs and his nobility of character.

The secondary characters were mostly wonderful (Bolt, Gael, Rory, Fess, Wag, etc.). The bad guys were real jerks and I enjoyed it when certain ones got their just desserts! Some of them got redemption, which was even better!

There are a couple of loose ends, but I've heard that there may be more books set in this world in the works. I sure hope so!! I look forward to reading all of his future books!!

Laurin says

I really liked the first two books (and the introductory novella) in the series, but I loved The Wounded Shadow. It was absolutely crammed with everything I love in a good read: terrifically crafted and intelligent characters, intricate world building, intense and exciting adventure, good and evil, love and heartbreak, and fabulous wit. Willet, Gael, Rory, Bolt, and all the characters that I have gotten to know over the first books, I came to cherish in this book, and I already miss spending time with them! I have a feeling I'll be re-reading this series. ?

Patrick Carr just keeps getting better, and I can't wait to see what he has for his readers next!

Many, many thanks to Bethany House and NetGalley for the digital copy of this novel for review purposes. I was not required to give a positive review. All opinions are my very own! ?

Kyrie says

This is the third and last book in Patrick W. Carr's 'Darkwater Saga', but the second that I have read.

'The Wounded Shadow' jumps right in where 'The Shattered Vigil' left off. Literally. In the middle of a scene. This technique can be both a positive and a negative one to use in a book series. For a reader who just finished one book and has immediate access to the next one, it creates a wonderful feeling of expectance. But it can also be very disjointing and confusing, causing an unfamiliar reader to have to read whole chapters before gaining any kind of idea about what's going on.

Overall, this was an intriguing and enjoyable read. It was a well-crafted story (complex characters, intricate world-building), quite a page-turner, with many interlocking parts and weaving details that the author was able to keep straight admirably! However, there were a few aspects I found unpleasant.

One of the most irritating aspects of the story itself was the shameless way that the character Gael presented herself in several situations. It seemed that she possessed very little dignity, decorum, or self-respect in her provocative mannerisms, as well as little respect towards her fiancé's desire for decency and honor in their relationship, or compassion toward his struggles. Though supposedly one of the 'heroes' of the story, she seemed to have a lot to learn about being a real one.

A couple of other negatives I found were the many women in religious leadership positions, the vaguely nagging 'danglers' left at the end (What ever happened to Lelwin? Why did Ealdor reach out to Willet in the first place, and were Willet's unanswered questions to him ever answered? Was Modrie's 'mind' ever restored and the sentinel race reestablished?), and – at the risk of sounding like I'm splitting hairs - the font size was small and painful to try to read, as in the previous book (I would rather be able to read the words without squinting, even if it means a thicker book).

All of the above aside, there were quite a few positive points. Allegorical tints to the story were much more evident in this book than in the previous one. Also, the development of young Mark's character and Elieve's redemption were probably my favorite aspects of the story. Their interaction was a fascinating and well-written situation. Mark's determination that Elieve be rescued, his honorable conduct, and his unwavering dedication to her recovery in the face of huge odds, represent some of the most lacking (and yet most desirable) character traits in young people today. Perhaps we would see more 'miracles' happen now, if there were more people willing to sacrifice for others, work hard, and stay committed until the goal is accomplished, as Mark did.

I received a free copy of this book from the publisher. No review, positive or otherwise, was required—all opinions are my own.

Andrew Miller says

The Darkwater Forest is growing at an alarming rate, drawing people into the tangled brambles of evil and corrupting them to serve its own ends. Racing against the northern continent's inexorable descent into madness, the Vigil has resorted to children's tales in a last ditch effort to stop the encroaching darkness. But they cannot hope to succeed even in this while Willet Dura holds a vault within his mind. His vault must be

broken, but the only way the Vigil knows to do this will result in a broken mind as well, and they need Willet intact if they hope to defeat the Darkwater. With their choices limited and evil growing, will they ever be able to discover the path to victory?

The third and (for now) final installment of The Darkwater Saga picks up right where The Shattered Vigil left off. Given tasks by an angelic being, the Vigil has split up in hopes that they can somehow stave off the Darkwater's influence. At the start of the book, the story seems to continue within the already established current from the previous two books, especially so far as Toria Deel and Fess are concerned. They are instructed to head north, to hold the Darkwater at bay for as long as they can. Pellin's task as well makes sense, though his storyline begins to diverge somewhat from the main plotline somewhat as it grows in complexity. Willet's story, on the other hand, seems to go in a completely unrelated direction, at least at first. As the story progresses, the author is able to bring Willet's meanderings back into line with the general plot, but it leaves the reader wondering if all of the extra story material was necessary. To be sure, what it adds is interesting, and certainly is not dull; a little extra political intrigue certainly does not hurt the story, especially if the author wishes to expand on The Darkwater Saga, which he has hinted at.

A note on style: Patrick Carr is quite good at what he does; he brings a technical element to his stories that are often missing with other authors who write similar works. It might not be far-fetched to say that The Darkwater Saga is the story he was born to write; at the least, fantasy-mystery fits his writing style well.

[NEXT PARAGRAPH CONTAINS SPOILERS]

One of the largest issues with the story is the relationship between Willet Dura and his betrothed, Gael. Throughout the series, Willet is constantly trying to figure out how the two of them can be together, and yet it should not work based on the rules set out in the story world. But for some reason, Willet cannot bring himself to sacrifice her, when he is willing to sacrifice all of his other comforts and desires in order to help others. Perhaps what is more troublesome is the carnal nature that their relationship takes in this third book. The almost constant focus of their romantic banter is sex; and while that would certainly play a role in their relationship, it takes precedence here. The biggest issue with this is that in the previous books, their relationship revolved more around witty banter and the turn of their thoughts. Now, all of a sudden, Gael is some sex—mongering beast that is constantly hinting and flirting with Willet, sometimes seeming to downright seduce him in the way she dresses (all this sensuality aside, they never once have sex). The point of this being, their relationship seems to have been cheapened to the point of being quite a worldly one. Beyond all of this, in the first book, and somewhat in the second, the author seemed to be setting up Toria and Willet for a romantic relationship with each other. It would have made more sense, but instead Gael and Willet cannot give up their selfish desires for one another (it should perhaps be said that Gael cannot give up her selfish desires for Willet; despite knowing that he will have to live for centuries with the pain of her passing, she still insists upon marrying him, doing all that she can to attach herself to him so that he will feel obligated to continue their relationship).

There are of course the seemingly inevitable loose threads left hanging in the story, such as a rather dubious statement made by Willet that is never satisfactorily explained. Also, the conclusion came across as a bit rushed; there are some areas of the book that seem more intense than the climax, such as certain parts of Pellin's story, and even parts of Willet's story as it meanders through the politics of the Northern Continent. That being said, should not the climax of the story be the highest point of the action? Perhaps because the climax needed to be presaged by other actions that were necessary to accomplish first in order for the solution to the conflict to be discovered, when the actual time came for what the characters learned to be acted upon, it had already lost some of its dramatic power, due to similar events having played out previously in the book.

All of that negativity aside, the book reads well for the most part, holds the reader's attention, and certainly does not grow boring. Disregarding the somewhat rushed ending, this is certainly the best and most

interesting book of the series, perhaps even the best work Carr has yet penned. It is to be hoped that there will indeed be more stories featuring Willet Dura and the rest of the Vigil.

Amber says

The Wounded Shadow is a heart-stopping, action-packed end that will satisfy any fantasy reader. The third book pulls out all of the stops as it barrels to then end. Secrets are revealed and shadows come to the light as an enemy older than time dares to unleash his evil on a completely unsuspecting and vastly unprepared world. As the loose ends and myriad of questions are answered, horrors beyond comprehension and wonders beyond imagination unfold before your eyes. Just when you don't think you can take any more revelations, another one springs out before your eyes to take you unaware and twist your world in another direction. This is a fantastic treat for enthusiastic fans of Patrick Carr. Nothing is possibly as sweet as one of his exquisite masterpieces!

Lord Dura Willet has had his life turned upside down and inside out by a deadly mystery that he can't remember. In all his years on this earth, he can't shake that this one might be the end of him, but he also knows that the price of not finding out the truth will be higher than he ever hopes to live with. Not many friends have stood by his side at the danger that both finds him and the danger that he puts himself in, but thankfully Bolt, Geal, and Rory have proven their unfailing devotion more times than he can count. When hope is on the line and the darkness of night appears to prevail, can Dura convince those he has gathered together to follow his crazy plan, or will he find what lies on the other side of eternity before his time?

I love that Carr's main characters are flawed humans, but above all they let their heart lead them. Even if you are as naïve as the day you were born, no one can truly fault you for following the path that your heart sets before you. While it definitely won't be an easy journey to walk, it will be one well worth the pain and suffering in the end. Isn't it our scars that tell our story better than any words? They are more the badges of courage; they are proof that we are willing to expend the energy to go the extra mile for what we know is right even if we are surrounded by a world that is lost and only knows how to look out for itself.

Patrick Carr is an incredibly gifted author who can paint beautifully complex worlds filled with absolutely fascinating characters that are both wonderfully flawed and devotedly hopeful. His characters will touch your heart in a way that you can never shake or walk away from. That touch will sear itself in to your very soul where you will carry it until you find another who needs to know that they are precious beyond measure, loved without condition, and needed beyond all.

Reanne says

This is a series where I got each book through NetGalley. So I didn't actually have to pay for any of them, and I'm glad for that. It kept me interested (at least when I was able to read the whole series continuously once this last one was out, since it really didn't work for me with long breaks between books) but I really don't think it was as good as it could have been.

This review will contain spoilers for this book as well as previous books. I'll try to tag them.

First, the good parts. I enjoy most of the major characters in this book. I really think that's what kept me

reading through the whole series. With some exceptions, I cared what happened to most of the people. Willet had some blind spots where other people were concerned, I think, but he was generally a decent, noble guy who made a good hero. Bolt was cool and always entertaining. Gael made a very good female character and love interest. Rory, Fess, and Mark were fun. Custos was delightful.

I was happy that in the end, (view spoiler)

But the reason I can't give this book more than two stars is because the worldbuilding is way too inconsistent, the plot relies way too often on people doing stupid things or things that don't make sense, and the writing really isn't that great. I was constantly rolling my eyes or thinking, "Oh, come on." Far, far too many times to give proper examples. But one was where first Willet meets a dude and Bolt goes, "Be sure to delve him," and then Willet doesn't, and the dude goes away before it can happen, and everyone had forgotten about it the instant Bolt said it anyway. And then Toria meets the dude and thinks she should delve him, but then doesn't for no apparent reason. Maybe this was the author's idea of foreshadowing (view spoiler) but it wasn't subtle at all. It just made the characters look like idiots for being so careless, not doing something after explicitly knowing they should do it, and then not ever thinking of it again. This sort of thing happens again and again and again in this series. Or where Willet gets basically kidnapped and brought under guard before some powerful person who has a task for him to do, not giving him any option to refuse, and when he goes, "Okay, I'll do it, but in order to do it, I'll need this," and the person responds with, "If I give you that, what will you do for me in return?" and he *doesn't* go, "Um, you're the one forcing me to do a thing. If you don't want it done, don't give me that thing I need, and I'll go on my way like I was trying to do before you captured me." He never says that, even though he finds himself in that situation more than once.

Things I was not thrilled with about this book and the ending: (view spoiler)

Also, GAEL. The author goes out of his way to give Gael the badass physical gift that makes people super fighters, and then doesn't give her a single freaking cool thing to do. Bolt gets multiple cool scenes showing off his skills. So does Rory. So do others. Gael doesn't get one single cool badass moment. The only reason she even has the gift, as far as the story is concerned, is to give her some excuse to be there with Willet. What a waste!

Kind of related to the problem with Gael, this author pays lip service to the idea of women being equal to men in this society, but he can never seem to really commit to it. We see no women with impressive physical/fighting gifts--aside from the one brief moment for the female urchin in the first book. Gael has the gift but we never get to see her use it (running smoothly and shooting arrows fast is about the extent of what we get), so that doesn't count. Both of the older female members of the Vigil refuse to be Eldest because of reasons, making sure their male colleagues are forced to shoulder the responsibility even if they don't want it. Elieve literally has no past, thoughts, or even personality of her own; she barely ever speaks; she exists solely to be the object of Mark's devotion. The female urchin is pretty much only in the story in order to have a rapey past, get gang raped, and then let the rapes in her past totally define her for the rest of her life. I just really feel like the author thought he was being pretty equal in his treatment of women, but he fell pretty far short, IMO.

As for this being Christian fantasy ... meh. There are obvious parallels in the way people talk about God and stuff, but in the end, it still comes down to some big, bad evil being (on a level of a demon, maybe?) who can't be killed but only stopped even though he's totally destroying the world and taking over lots of people's

minds, and meanwhile the good guys (angels?) are constrained by mysterious and arbitrary rules and one of them dies because he has the nerve to tell a human some very vague clues about how maybe to go about stopping the big evil being. In other words, it's another fantasy where evil is incredibly powerful and good is weak. Which, in terms of Christian fantasy supposedly being about speaking Christian truth in a fantasy sort of metaphor, is not speaking truth. (view spoiler) That's just not truth. Of course, that also goes back to my other problems with logic, worldbuilding, and people being stupid, as well.

So yeah, I really wanted to like this series because I enjoyed a lot of the characters, but the author simply was not up to the task he set himself in writing a complex fantasy trilogy. A for effort, but C- for execution.

V. Palmer says

The Darkwater Saga is over. And I'm sad. Much sadder than I expected to be. Don't get me wrong, I've immensely enjoyed The Darkwater Saga! But these books rooted themselves into my heart in a way I never expected. These stories grab you.

And they don't let go.

And I mean that in the best, non-creepiest way possible. Haha! ;-)

The Wounded Shadow was probably my favorite book of the trilogy! The battle over the ancient evil in The Darkwater Forest reaches a climax that will dizzy your mind with it's fascinating complexities. Patrick W. Carr has a gift for throwing a multitude of seemingly unrelated conflicts in the way of the characters as they work towards saving their world, but when those big reveals come, you realize that random conflict has a HUGE impact on the outcome of the story. The story is told through multiple perspectives, but Willet Dura's (the title character) perspective continued to be my favorite. Probably because he's good at the sarcasm, and I love a hero who can wield his sarcasm like a sword!!

Despite the bloody battles, malicious villains, painful loses, and daring escapades, I found the root message of this story to be about believing in the power of love - that you are loved. And no weapon is mightier! The beautiful ending tore me to pieces, but drove that truth home ten times as much!

Four Stars ~ The wonderful conclusion to this epic fantasy series is both perfect and bittersweet! If you're a fan of J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, or Donita K. Paul, then you'll want to check out this series! The Wounded Shadow is the last book in The Darkwater Saga. Note: you must, must, must read The Shock of Night and The Shattered Vigil respectively before reading The Wounded Shadow. Trust me. As sad as I am that this series has come to an end, I look forward to whatever Patrick W. Carr writes next because I know it will be awesome.

Disclaimer ~ In accordance with FTC regulations, I received a copy of this book from the author/publisher. I was not compensated, nor was a positive review required. All opinions expressed are my own.

Rachael says

I had considered the reviewing each book of the trilogy separately, but the reality is they could be one near-1500 page volume, so close do the books follow on each other and so intricately are they entwined. There's hardly any repeat of information from the previous books (which I, reading them all in the course of a week, appreciated, but I feel for anyone who had to wait a year to complete the series).

This is one intricately-plotted story. Nothing is wasted; everything is important enough to come back again, no matter how inconsequential it seems at the beginning. The world-building is incredibly intricate, with complex politics not only amongst monarchs and their courts, but also within the church (and their relations to said monarchs), and even those politics vary by region, as they would in real life. From one kingdom to the next, cultures change, traditions differ, accents appear. There was a ton of thought put into building this world.

The characters, no matter how young or old, wise or foolish, all have their flaws, and all are given ample opportunity to grow. It's discouraging at times how long it takes the members of the Vigil to trust Willet, but in spite of his frustration and anger, he doesn't give in to pettiness, but learns profound grace, as they themselves also learn. I liked how the author created Willet; there is no doubt he's a good guy, but he is much darker than the typical hero, and he stands out all the more for it.

As allegory goes, it isn't nearly as heavy-handed as CS Lewis. There are many parallels with the bible--Lucifer's fall, the triune God, gifts of the Spirit; there are also many parallels with today's church, in both its truth and brokenness, that can convict from this fantasy world as easily as straight up admonitions from ours. There are powerful examples of grace and redemption, especially in the final volume. The author does an incredible job of pointing to truth while remaining true to the spirit of his story.

While I enjoyed the earlier volumes of the story, the final is truly the masterpiece. I can't see any way it could have more fittingly concluded the story. It's bittersweet, as the best heroic tales are (Lord of the Rings, for example), and the world can never be as it once was, but maybe--in time, when healing has run its course and some of the horror has washed away--it can be better, and they'll be better prepared when evil raises its head again.

A 5-star series.

Christian Fiction Addiction says

There is a reason that Patrick W. Carr continues to win accolades for his novels: his novels are instant classics in the fantasy, speculative fiction genre. And this is demonstrated no better than with his "Darkwater Saga" series, wrapping up with a stirring conclusion with this final book, "The Wounded Shadow".

If you have been following along since Willet and the Vigil first burst onto the scene, then you have no doubt been looking forward to the outcome of the epic battle between good and evil that has been building from book one. "The Wounded Shadow" finds the members of the Vigil desperate to stop the evil that is emerging from the forest, threatening to overtake the whole world. The tension builds steadily over the course of the

story as secrets are revealed and events build towards the conclusion, and let me tell you that the journey is worth it! My favourite character continues to be Willet as he is just so easy to relate to, so utterly human in how he acts, yet with these amazing gifts! I love the way that the gifts manifest themselves in all of the characters in this story (and series), and can't help but wish that some of these existed in real life (I wouldn't mind the ability to bound up the side of buildings myself). Carr has done an excellent job at bringing a truly eclectic group of characters together, showcasing a beautiful picture of how the church should be, with people from all walks of life working together to help light overcome the darkness.

Fans of fantasy fiction are going to delight in "The Wounded Shadow" and indeed the entire series. The world Carr has created is complex and rich, and the characters fighting for good have been wonderfully fleshed out, with much to cheer on as they battle against all odds. I award this novel a solid rating of 4 out of 5 stars.

Book has been provided courtesy of Baker Publishing Group and Graf-Martin Communications, Inc.

J.M. Christian says

To say that I was excited for the third and final book of the Darkwater saga by Patick Carr is an understatement. I practically kept my eyes peeled on my inbox for the email from Bethany House listing the book up for review, then hoping I'd make it on the list. And we'll skip the part with me doing a victory dance once it did. :P

Anyway....

Though the series has had its rough spots, overall, it's been a great adventure. The world-building, the characters.... Honestly, I need to read it over again because I miss it. I'd highly recommend reading the first two books in the series, so you have a proper grasp of what is going on.

The story starts with Willet and the other members of the vigil racing to halt the evil of the Darkwater forest that is sweeping over the continent. With people lured by rumors of gold and precious aurium in the forest's depths, Cesla is building a powerful army with abilities to rival even the gifted. The solution to their defeat? Locked in a vault within the tortured mind of Willet Dura.

So where to start? The plot, despite some lags in places, is awesome. The tension, the emotional journey of the characters, keeps you riveted to the pages. And I must admit, Patrick Carr went deeper with the characters than I was expecting. Anne Elisabeth Stengl is one of my favorite authors because she knows how to bring to life a character's dark side and still show the redeeming power of love that bring a person back from the edge of the abyss. To my utter surprise, Patrick Carr went this route and succeeded! Mark, the former urchin and thief now Pellin's apprentice, who shows more heart and depth than a priest in his desire to bring back the mind of a girl who was twisted into becoming a mindless dwimor, capable only of killing; Pellin, who saw how Cesla was snared into exploring the Darkwater. He recognized the man's pride that could have been his own and led him into destruction. And in spite of all Cesla's evil, still loved the man that was once his brother and mentor, and strove to remind him of that in the end. These were perhaps a couple of the most moving areas in the story that touched me.

Toria Deel has been a journey in progress. Originally, she was more of a pompous twit than anything else. And definitely willing to do whatever it took to further the Vigil's goal. The end justifying the means, regardless of who was hurt. Losing the man she loved and being teamed up with a former urchin causes her to soften.

Bolt, honestly, you gotta love. The man is like an older version of Batman and Wolverine thrown in there (DC/Marvel reference, I know :P). He always expects something bad to happen, and rarely shows much emotion. But he has such a dry sense of humor, you can't help smiling as you read.

Willet...Willet has been an off and on character for me. While I like him, he's not one of my favorite characters, which is odd since he is the MAIN character in the story. But I think the problem lies with the fact that Patrick Carr tried too hard at times to make the character flawed, and a bit of a wise-mouth. But he's capable and does try to keep his head in tight situations, so he still works.

The gift of domere changed his life. Some might argue it wasn't for the better, as it grants to Willet an unnaturally long lifespan that will see him still hale and hearty while the woman he loves grows old. But he learns to accept both it and Gael's love, and acknowledge that he must leave everything in Aer's hands.

I came across one review that mention how this book has nothing to do with Christianity, wallows in worldly wisdom, and loses touch with truth. As a reader who actively searches for inspiring reads, I respectfully have to disagree. Does the story expound Christian beliefs? Yes. Does it whack you over the head with them? No. I have always believed that the greatest thing a story can do is "show" the message through the characters and their actions, instead of delivering a sermon that makes you roll your eyes.

In the Wounded Shadow, you see the consequences of pride and yet the hope for salvation. Mercy, forgiveness, love, and restoration come together in a sweeping epic that truly makes The Wounded Shadow a satisfying conclusion to this series.

Verdict: A definite buy!

(I received a free copy of the book from the publisher and author in exchange for an honest review. All opinions expressed are my own.)

Lisa says

The Wounded Shadow by Patrick W. Carr is the third installment in the Darkwater Saga. It was a little slow going at first; but once I got into the story, I could not read fast enough. I predict this will be one of my favorites for the year.

There are so many things to say about this book I am not sure where to start. So, I am going to just jump right in with the world building, which has to be the most elaborate I think I have had the pleasure to read in a long time. In this way, it was reminiscent of the Lord of the Rings trilogy. The imagination, time and effort it took to construct this world is just mind boggling. The thought of how to keep it all straight while you are developing the plot is enough to give me a head ache.

Because the story is told from three POVs, there are three main characters which, by the way, worked nicely for the plot. The character of Willet was my favorite. Yet, regardless of which character you like the best, I found that it was easy to connect with all of them. The author was very conscientious of the reader when developing the characters and that is one of the things that sets this book, and the series, apart from others I have read in this genre.

The last thing I want to share is about the plot. It is complex and with the POV changing among the lead characters it can get confusing so you must stay on your toes. Yet, I never felt it was over worked or forced in anyway. Everything fit together nicely, and it made for a great read.

I love it when a book just blows me away. I know I am gushing here, but this book is worthy of it. Now I want to go back and read each book again and I am sure I will in the future. In addition, the author has left openings (in the form of loose ends) for more stories to come out of this world. I can only hope and sit on the edge of my seating waiting for the next one.

I received a free copy from the publisher in exchange for my honest opinion.

For more reviews, and author interviews, see my blog at www.thespineview.com.

Rebekah Gyger says

4.5 Stars

Very rarely does a good book take me longer than two days to read. I speed through them, soaking up the story without much effort, and anything written so densely as to require more time is usually skimmed or set aside. The Darkwater Saga is the first series I have ever read in which that was not the case and The Wounded Shadow is best of the three.

I may have said this in my other reviews, but clearly this trilogy is not an easy read. It requires a lot of time and thought to follow both the characters' subtext interactions as well as puzzle out the intricacies of the world and plot. And that Carr has managed to do this in a way that is still compelling to a reader who usually prefers her stories to be straight forward and to the point is something I applaud.

But as for this book in comparison to the other two, this one finally had a true spark of hope. Mark, a character introduced in the last book, truly shines in this and quickly set himself apart as my favorite character. He was caring and challenged the Vigil in a way that Willet's attitude was never able to accomplish successfully. Though we had to wait two years for this book, it was well worth the wait.

I have provided an honest review after having received a copy of this book through the publisher.

Jennay Amber says

I have never felt more pressure to get a review 'right'. So naturally, I've cleaned my desk, refilled my water bottle and written out my 'to-do' list for the rest of the week first, just so I can really concentrate. It's just that this book, this series for that matter, is so dear to me...I want this review to do them justice...

I have been a fan (is there a better word for 'fan'?) of Patrick W. Carr since A Cast of Stones and fell in love with the rest of The Staff and the Sword series. And from By Divine Right, I knew I would love The Darkwater Saga too. I desperately eagerly awaited the release date for this book and the email from Bethany House saying that it was available for review. There was not the slightest bit of fear that it would not live up to expectations (the thought honestly never crossed my mind), even though I had no idea where the story would take me or how it would conclude, I knew it couldn't fail. The world was too real, the characters too 'alive' for the series not to end the only way it could (even though I had no idea what that was – that make sense, right?). In short, The Wounded Shadow did not disappoint and I cannot praise it or recommend it

highly enough. The world that Patrick W. Carr has created in this series is so well-built, so rich with history, and so well thought-out – from traditions and customs which differ from kingdom to kingdom to the differences in the manners and mindsets of the people who come from different parts of the continent.

I could go on. But like I said, I want to do justice with this review, which will not happen if I turn this into an essay...

A well-built world is nothing if it is not home to well-developed characters. I think that is what is so special about Patrick W. Carr's writing...his characters. They are real. They are flawed. They have such distinct personalities, from their phrasing to their individual quirks – its all there. As with Errol Stone, Willet Dura is a reluctant 'hero' whose damaged, and headstrong, and kind. But it's also not all about him. Bolt, Gael, Custos as well as the rest of the Vigil and their guards and apprentices are all 'present' – with pasts, different viewpoints, voices, and beliefs. All are important and were treated as such. In *The Wounded Shadow*, we get to see the arc of their growth as characters. They have changed – for better or for worse – by the events in the past two novels, and we see their growth and development continue as this series reaches its end. That character growth and development in so many different characters in itself is an incredible feat.

However, what makes these books so special is the way in which they carry their messages. The fragility yet tenacity of the mind, the folly of pride, the redemptive quality of love, the brokenness of humanity and its restoration are all dealt with in such a deep way that its like my spirit understands more so than what my words can explain. What I love most is how the heart of the Father and the truths of His Word are revealed and realized through characters in a fantasy in a way that makes them more real to me in reality. That is art. And that is something truly special.

I received a copy of *The Wounded Shadow* from Bethany House in exchange for me review.

Meagan Myhren-bennett says

The Wounded Shadow
The Darkwater Saga #3
By Patrick W. Carr

Oh, my! This is a fantastic conclusion to the Darkwater Saga. Picking up where *The Shattered Vigil* left off we are again faced with the utter collapse of the northern continent unless the Vigil can somehow overcome their losses and access the knowledge that Willet Dura has hidden away within his vault.

But the darkness that is the Darkwater is spreading and the Vigil and the Kings and Queens of the northern continent are being hunted. The Vigil know why they are a target of Cesla's now corrupted nature. But the reasoning behind the targeting of the rulers is unknown. If they can solve this mystery perhaps they can stop the darkness or at least halt its spread.

But nothing is ever easy and still Willet hasn't earned the trust of the Vigil have a scrying stone. With Willet, Bolt, Rory, and Gael out of contact with the remaining Vigil they are on their own as the coming battle with the evil of the Darkwater Forest draws ever closer. Using his skills as a reeve Willet follows what they do know - hoping that some long-forgotten truth will be discovered giving them the answers they so desperately need.

Meanwhile, Pellin, Allta, and Mark are on a quest of their own. But the knowledge and aid that Pellin seeks will come with a heavy cost. Along the way they make a discovery that changes everything they thought they knew about those who carry the dark vaults of the Darkwater. But is the knowledge something to which they use to their advantage or has it come too late to make a difference.

Toria Deel and Fess are own their own mission to help those guarding against the Forest. With Wag to aid them, they are a formidable force. But the Forest is vast and the boundaries ever growing. And the enemy - well, let's just say that he is not about to follow rules when victory is his aim.

Ealdor, whom the Vigil view as a symptom of Willet's mind slowly succumbing to his time within the Darkwaters, is a pivotal part of the story. Not to give anything away and spoil it but it is quite interesting.

I really believe this is the best book of the series - which is really saying something because I've thoroughly enjoyed them all. Now you can't read these out of order they must be read as they were released or you'll totally miss out on key moments that explain later scenes. The Vigil can't be fully appreciated in relationship to Willet without the previous books. This would be an excellent summer reading project if you have the time.

For those who have read Carr's previous series, The Staff and The Sword, you will not feel as if you are in the same story with key names of characters and places changed. No this is a unique and unto itself story world. The characters come to life under Carr's skillful craftsmanship and will stay with long after you have closed the book. This is a fantasy but should appeal to a wider audience as the fantasy is not an over the top smacking you in the face not letting you ever forget it fantasy. There is a subtle thread that hints at the Fall throughout providing an additional layer to the overall story. Those who enjoy the works of Tolkien and C.S. Lewis should enjoy this book and series.

I was provided a complimentary review copy of this book by the publisher - Bethany House with no expectations of a positive review ~ all opinions expressed are my own.

Sam Nelson says

I did receive this book at no charge for my unbiased, honest opinion.

Let me start by saying this is part of a series, which I did not realize when I ordered the book. However, even though this is part of a series, it was easily read even without the context of the other books in the series. It is definitely a story in the same fantasy genre as LOTR, Narnia, or Harry Potter. Very well written with great detail, it easily allows you to imagine the journey on which the characters embark.

There are only 2 real complaints I have: 1] that the story line jumped around a bit; I feel like the author could have made it a bit easier to realize when the story jumps to another character's leg of the journey as it was a little hard to follow from one jump in the story at times. And 2] while the story isn't numbered or if (like me) you miss the small note in the upper corner of the cover indicating that it is part of a series, as the reader, you have no idea there are books before it; this could easily be the editor/publisher that didn't see the need for a list of books in the series or to better display that it is in fact part of a series more prominently, BUT I always feel it is important to include a list of all books in the series that way the reader understands that some aspects of the story that were not explained in this book may have been explained in a previous book, along

with affording the reader the opportunity to read the prequels to that book in order BEFORE undertaking the new book.

Again, while it is a huge pet peeve of mine to read books in a series out of order, in this case, it posed no great issues. The story was EXTREMELY well written. It got its hooks in early on and the intrigue of figuring out the mission and how different aspects of the characters' journeys would affect the outcome of the mission was enthralling! I greatly enjoyed this book. The characters were relatable and complex. The story line kept you guessing. And considering that 99% of the books I've read are pretty formulaic and I can tell you the ending after reading the first couple of chapters, this one was not in that same group.

I don't want to give any spoilers away as I truly feel this should be read rather than have my feeble attempt to retell it would never be able to come even remotely close to doing it justice. My best advice: even if your primary love is not fantasy, still give this one a try.
