



In the Shadow of the Mountains

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In the twilight of the year 2003, a stranger arrives in the tiny town of Burns, Colorado. Whispers begin to fly as bodies appear, savagely mutilated, throughout the neighborhood, and the responsibility falls on two monstrously unprepared high school students to uncover the truth before the undead can destroy their hometown.

Chris Doyle is a slacker and a sci-fi geek, barely eking through his senior year of high school; Aaron Margolis is a child prodigy who could have graduated at age twelve if his parents had let him. They have never had anything in common until a woman is murdered and Aaron comes asking for Chris's help – he is seeing Texans who cannot be real.

Then the high school's English teacher disappears and is replaced by Daniel Leland, the sharp and reclusive newcomer, a man already convicted by public opinion. He says that he is a hunted man, and Aaron believes him, but Chris is not as sure. Doubts or no, Chris has no choice but to join up with the teacher when his best friend is kidnapped by superhuman forces, but this adventure is nothing like his comic books.

In the Shadow of the Mountains Details

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From Reader Review In the Shadow of the Mountains for online ebook

Aderyn Wood says

Recently I sat down to read 'In the Shadow of the Mountains' by MR Graham, and found myself enthralled. It's always exciting to find an Indie author whose work is of such a high standard.

'In the Shadow of the Mountains' is part of a series of novels called 'The Books of Lost Knowledge'. Set in the small Colorado town, Burns City, it begins with the mysterious arrival of a newcomer who moves into town during a snow storm. No one sees him for days and this sets the tongues wagging as well as piquing the interest of readers. I was certainly intrigued by him from the very start.

The new arrival is quickly introduced to us as the 'old' and gentlemanly Daniel Leland, who has come to Burns City trying to escape a mysterious past. The story is primarily told through the point of view of three teens who live in the town. Liz, Chris and Aaron. Liz and Chris have been friends for years and we learn that Chris is interested in more than friendship, but Liz is anxious about change and the uncertainty that the following year will bring once she moves away to college. Aaron is a child genius. He is younger than Liz and Chris, but his astute observations shed light on the puzzling events that take place when two more strangers arrive in town.

Then the deaths take place. And with each new death, Aaron observes the two strangers in town. His logical mind quickly works things out so that when one of the men moves without making tracks in the snow, Aaron and the reader wonder what the hell is going on!

The mystery unfolds with fantastic pacing that kept me turning the pages eager to learn more. The story is so interesting, but the character development is equally so. Liz, Chris and Aaron all have their own flaws and weaknesses but are extremely likable and I wanted them to be okay. Daniel Leland is a mystery throughout the story. I did guess his secret, but still, when it was revealed, it was great reading. There were some very cool secondary characters too. Mina Hobbs is fantastic as 'wing man'.

For me, a real strength of Graham's writing is her style. She creates such wonderfully poetic imagery, it is truly a pleasure to read. Her control of language conjures a dark atmosphere that is great for reading on a cool rainy day (like I did).

The only nitpick I have is trivial and there is a minor spoiler here so don't read on if you want to be surprised. Essentially, this is a vampire story, and overall I think the 'vampiric' quality of the story is of a very high standard. All 'common' knowledge of vampires is taken into consideration and the characters even refer to 'Dracula' as the 'bible' on the lore. But there is no mention or explanation of sunlight. This is a little gripe, but it seemed incongruous as so many other beliefs were addressed, just not that one. I kept expecting it to come up but it didn't. But, that's the only thing I can pick on.

Overall, I very much enjoyed this book and I would recommend it to lovers of the paranormal genre, but also to anyone who enjoys a good story. I know I will pick this up again to read one day, probably in the middle of winter, with a nice fire going - that's how much I enjoyed it.

My rating - 9/10

Brian Bigelow says

It's well written and edited. Unfortunately for me the book just didn't grab me like I wanted it to. It's got all the right elements which is what kept me reading. I think I'll pass on the next book on the series though.

Miriam says

The standout feature of this book is definitely Daniel Leland. Enigmatic, morally ambiguous, and at times quite vulnerable, he's really not your run-of-the-mill mild-mannered schoolteacher.

I like how the narrative dances around him and keeps him *just this much* out of focus. It's a hard job keeping up mystery and suspense in paranormal fiction nowadays--sometimes, I wanted to shake the other character for not seeing what seemed to be incredibly obvious to me (with, of course, my unfair advantages)--but Graham does pretty well.

La La - Everyone's Crazy Aunt says

I had a bit of trouble getting into the story in the beginning, but the last 2/3 of the book were as fabulous as its companion book, *The Medium*, which I gave a five star rating! I will be back with a review. I plan on reading the other two Books of Lost Knowledge in the next few days and will be reviewing them on my blog as a whole.

Shannon says

This is an interesting story that kept me reading. The characters are complex and believable. I'm looking forward to reading more by this up and coming new author!

Karen says

I like the main character - Daniel Leland. Can't say I was overwhelmed by the book, but it was enjoyable. I would read the other books about the character because I find him intriguing but that is perhaps why I didn't love the book - I didn't learn enough about him. As a secondary gripe. why is the series called the Book of Lost Knowledge? This book (apparently #2 in the series) didn't seem to develop a "big picture" as I would have expected. I read this book out of sequence, so I will give the first in the series a try and see if helps things come together for me.

Alicia Wright says

I read this rather slowly at first, it takes a while to get going and it also took me some time to warm up to Daniel, but he is busy keeping his distance from the other characters too, so I feel that's only natural. Once it

did get going though, I blazed through the rest of the book in two days flat. The tension rocketed right up, and I just had to read to find out what would happen. There was a shock at the end, and there are questions left unanswered, but this is one of the Books of Lost Knowledge series, so I'm sure I will get some answers in future, and I look forward to reading the next one!

Judith says

I received this book as a ARC from Goodreads and waited to read it until I read the author's first Book of Lost Knowledge "The Wailing". A continuation of the life and adventures of Daniel Leland, this time on another continent and time line. I am enjoying this new twist to vampire writing by M.R. Graham and am very happy that I was chosen to read and review it. I'm not sure if "Twilight" fans would enjoy this but I think that anyone who enjoys a good vampire story will definitely like Professor Daniel Leland. He is rather a mysterious character, a loner, goes out by day as well as night and not much is really really revealed about his background or past (which makes him all the more mysterious!) but I am looking forward to more stories that may. A bit graphic but then any good vampire story should be! Thanks for letting me read and review this wonderful book and I am waiting for more adventures with Daniel.

This book can be read without reading "The Wailing" first.

Jodi Lamm says

In high school, I had this English teacher. He was a tall, older man with graying dark hair, a tweed jacket with leather patches at the elbows, and reading glasses he occasionally wore on the end of his nose. I became convinced he smoked a pipe outside class; that's how Masterpiece Theatre his look was. It was my first honors class, my teacher was brimming with intelligence and that classy educated-gentleman look, and oh how I fawned over him. Because that's what you do with that sort of teacher. You don't crush on him; you fawn. You don't write his name all over your three-ring binder; you sit back in class and quietly admire the man. My English teacher's name wasn't Daniel Leland, but it should have been. And that's why I loved *In the Shadow of the Mountains*. Because the central character was awesome. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

I recently reviewed a classic novella by considering the three "novel-virtues" most important to me. I'm thinking that's a good standard to use for all my reviews (unless I get a yen for something different). So here we go.

1. Was the story fun to read? I'll be totally honest and say I was hesitant to pick this up because the cover put me in mind of one of my uncle's classic westerns. Even after I picked it up, I found the initial pace slow. I told The Other Lamm I was giving it to 15% before I let it go. Then, right at 15%, BAM! And I couldn't put it down. The tense bits were tense, the thrilling bits thrilling, and the gruesome bits were bits of people! This is very much a bad-things-happen-in-a-small-town story, and as such, the author takes some time to introduce you to that town and the people who live in it, sprinkling in a mystery or two along the way. But when things get bad, they get really bad.

2. Did the characters intrigue me? As I said, the story's central (meaning catalytic) character is fantastic. I loved him. In fact, I knew about him via fan art, etc. before I even read the book. He is absolutely the opposite of what you would expect for... uh... a person... with his... history? Damn it! No spoilers. Anyway, the other characters are great, too. One antagonist kept me asking questions, and I couldn't help but sympathize on occasion, which is always a plus in my book. I LOVED the teenage characters because they

behaved like actual teenagers, in my opinion. In some books I've read (that shall remain nameless and aren't on my list because I never finished them), the teenage characters try way too hard to be teenagers. They go all wonky because the author either can't recall actually being a teenager or hung out with an entirely different crowd than I did when I was in high school. Graham's characters, on the other hand, are very relatable and have distinct, believable personalities. I especially liked Aaron. He was a smart outcast without feeling like a smart-outcast cliché. And I loved Mina Hobbs, too, because without her... uh... we would have had... Stuffandthings! No spoilers. But of course, all these characters play second fiddle to DOCTOR Leland. Even if I sometimes couldn't resist picturing him as Mr. DeMartino (an equally lovable, albeit entirely different character with an uncanny resemblance) from *Daria*.

3. Did the premise make me think? This isn't one of those books you have to ponder for weeks after reading to finally understand. It's pretty straightforward. I had a good idea of what was going down early on, but that didn't distract from the fun of the story. Reading *In the Shadow of the Mountains* felt a lot like watching *Fargo* to me. You know the villain and the motivation pretty quickly, but that's not a problem. The point of the story is the characters, and how they manage to work their way into and (possibly) out of a very bad situation. There were some questions left unanswered for me (like what the hell was the red thing thrown at the window in that one scene? Was it a human head? A dead animal? Strawberry upside-down cake? WHAT?), but this book, as I understand it, is part of a series, and I imagine most of those answers will come in subsequent books, if they haven't already been answered in past ones.

In conclusion, I will be reading more of these books in the future, and you should give this one a try, for sure.

Mike Marlow says

I liked it. It's an interesting small-town vampire story, with some well-built characters (even if they are teenagers). I thought the pacing improved as the book progressed, and there's a bunch of fun openings for sequels.

Janet York says

Really enjoyed this book! So many twists I didn't see coming. Will definitely read more of Ms Graham's books. Thank you so much for the autographed copy Ms Graham and Goodreads!

Ramona Plant says

This one is interesting in a different way. The other books focus much more on the perspective of our paranormal characters like Daniel, but this one is written much more from the "commoners" perspective, which I found intriguing. In the shadow of the Mountains fills in some gaps about Sebastian.

Clearly MR Graham knows her skill and is an excellent writer. The pace is maybe a tad slow in this one but nothing too much to notice. From all of the books in this series I have read so far this is probably my least

favorite though, but mostly because I read it from a different angle before so there weren't as many surprises left in this one.

I have received this book from the author for an honest review.

Martin Landry says

An awesome follow on to "The Wailing," I enjoyed it more because it had more of what I enjoyed about the first book, while adding deeper characters and a more comfortable length. While I still wanted more at the end, it didn't leave me "hungry" like "The Wailing" did. I would recommend reading both in sequence.

Maryann mayton says

I found myself entwined this book I was more then just loving the book but needing to read the whole series. The writer is so wonderful that I found myself buying other books as well as the others in this series. I think this is a series that everyone should go out and read.

D. Mellott says

I finished this book a long while ago, but I am nothing if not a lazy bass turd and have not updated my updates with any updates. Nonethemore, I am delightfully steamed at MR Graham. Mostly because this book was really good -- drew me in nicely -- and I was very happy with the way it ended. However, it was kind of like sex -- I am now recovered and want more -- looks like The Wailing is next. Is Aaron in it? Only one way to find out !!!
