



Hellraisers

Alexander Gordon Smith

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The Devil's Engine is a machine from the darkest parts of history. It can make any wish come true—as long as you are willing to put your life on the line. When a sixteen-year-old asthmatic kid named Marlow Green finds himself trapped in a surreal firefight against nightmarish creatures in the middle of his New York City neighborhood, he discovers a squad of secret soldiers dedicated to battling the legions of the Devil himself. Faced with monstrous apparitions, ancient weaponry, and his own hellishly tedious high school existence, Marlow submits to a demonic deal with the infernal device that enables him to join the battle—if it doesn't kill him first.

Hellraisers Details

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Author : Alexander Gordon Smith

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From Reader Review Hellraisers for online ebook

Shandra says

DNF at 43%

Thank you Amazon for refunding by \$7 and some change for this book! I just couldn't jive with it. The characters were annoying to me. The story seemed forced. Totally not at all close to the Lockdown series. Man, that was a good series!

Rachel says

If this book were a stew it would be comprised of the following ingredients: The meat would be The Matrix trilogy, there would be dashes of potatoes, carrots, and onions in the form of the Transformers, X-Men, and Minority Report, and the salt and pepper would be the YA tropes of "disinterested, drunken single parent," "possible world destroying war that can only be fought by teenagers," and "selfish teenager is selfish, putting everyone else at risk but in reality, he has to do this in order to move the plot forward."

Despite the above, when it's all put together the Hellraisers does feel like something different in the crushing wave of YA-Dystopia currently populating the market. Truly, I think the thing that frustrated me most weren't the obvious "nods" to the series listed above (I mean, come on, Pan is Trinity from Matrix, right?) it was that the world building was disjointed. Marlow asks a lot of good questions about The Engine and the Hellraisers and most of the time the characters answer back with "We don't know." I mean, I understand, this is a Divine technology, but still...

Good action scenes, fairly basic characters, unclear world-building

Tee loves Kyle Jacobson says

Okay I first have to say that this book was both weird and kick ass at the same time. I can't pin point what this book is like but I have to say that I love a good book about good VS evil and Demons VS Angels. Love love love these kind of stories but this one was very weird that it had me at the edge of my seat. I started to read it and thought to myself that this is not for me but kept reading and I got into the books os much so I ignored everyone and everything around me.

In this story we meet Marlow Green who is a 16 year old asthmatic who lives in a world where he saves a secret soldier from a demonic attack. When he does this he does not realize he sets off The Devil's Engine who decides the fate of everything and everyone. But as we all know there is always a price to pay for what you want and the price the devil's engine wants is great.

The machine will grant you any wish but that saying watch out what you ask for defiantly applies in this case. I can't wait for this book to be released because I am going to re-read it because that is how much I

liked it and I need to put some more things together for myself.

Kristen says

Alexander Gordon Smith's Lockdown series is extremely popular with the boys in my middle school library, so I thought I'd give this one a try in the hopes of finding a new series to add.

As someone who enjoys complicated, complex sci-fi, I have to admit that I just don't understand what is going on in this story. I don't know if things aren't explained enough (clearly there will be more information as the series progresses) or if I just didn't pay good enough attention. I don't fully understand the Engine or what it's purpose is (which at this point I think is intentional) and I don't understand why there are two sides. Again, I think this is intentional, but it makes the whole story have kind of a "so what?" vibe. Since I have so little information about what the Engine is and what it's purpose is, I just don't care about the characters or their fight.

There's a lot of action and gore--definitely appealing to teen boys--but I was hoping for a good story, as well.

Beth says

First of all, a big thanks to NetGalley for the free e-copy of the book! I really appreciate it!!!

You need to know that the Escape from Furnace books are a true favorite of mine, so I will always purchase books by Alexander Gordon Smith. Seriously, where does he come up with this stuff???

Hellraisers is so trippy! I love the whole idea of the Devil's Engine and the Hellraisers. You are going to really rally behind Marlow and Pan because deep down they are both so broken, but they continue to try to do the right thing. This book is full of action and humor...oh yeah...and it's gross (I LOVE THAT ABOUT YOU MR. SMITH!). The only thing that threw me a little was the excessive language. Would the characters talk like that? Yes. It was authentic to who the characters are, but it's a lot. I was just hoping that I could booktalk it to the sixth grade, but I'm pretty hesitant to do that at this point. That being said, I'm excited for book two and more of the wonderful, gross, horror that Smith cooks up! Bring it!!!

Chelsea ♥Peril Please♥ says

ARC provided by Netgalley in exchange for an honest review

That was the trouble with being a hellraiser.
Sometimes you got burned.

I think it goes without saying that I have really branched out on books I've read this year. I've fallen for crime novels, sci-fi novels, and, most recently, I've even fallen for some certain (ahem) steamier NA stories. My point is...I just enjoy *reading*. So when I was approached to read and review *Hellraisers*, I was all for it.

You can't run forever

And that's not even the best part-I **have had this author on my radar for years**. His book, Lockdown (look up and see if that's the name or Escape from the Furnace), has been something I have wanted to try for as long as I can remember. But here's the thing: It always seemed so scary. And anyone that knows me understands that I don't do scary. So, needless to say, when I was asked to read this story that didn't look nearly as terrifying...I was ecstatic.

I'll find you

I was right to be excited for a chance to read a book by this author: From the first page I was hooked. Marlow's story wasn't addicting because he was the strongest, the most badass, the most amazing guy ever. No, his story was addicting *in spite* of that. Marlow is what you would call a troublemaker, getting kicked out of school after school after school, until now it's the last straw and he has no where else to go. No friends and a mother who looks at him with eyes sad beyond their years because of how he is putting her through hell, he is desperate to make this final school work....even though he has already been kicked out and any chance of readmission vanished when he fled from the school grounds with a big F-YOU to the principal.

I'll find you, and you will burn

But after the initial process of escaping a suffocating situation, Marlow slows down and realizes just what he's done. Where does he have to go to now? What will his mother say? Hardly able to breathe without constant use of his inhaler, he's hardly an impressive being-in fact, he's actually a coward: Always running at the first sign of complacency, **always becoming the troublemaker** when he should be making it work. Marlow is nothing but trouble...but he's about to see what *real* trouble looks like....and it's not a kid with a bad attitude and an inhaler.

“Gonna throw the new dog in the pool? See if it drowns?”

“Call someone a dog too many times,” Marlow said, speaking slowly so he wouldn’t trip over his tongue, “and they might just start to bite.”

Walking into a situation better left in the movies, Marlow finds that he is in over his head. Strange creatures that can morph into about anything and rip your body to shreds in the blink of an eye, he has no clue what to do. A battle raging in front of him and, wait, is that a beautiful girl about to be impaled by one of said monsters?? Who better to be her knight in shining armor than Marlow???) ;)

“He’s clean,” he said. “Holding a pretty big torch for you, though, Pan. Just about all I could see in that simple little excuse for a mind.”

“Wait, no, *what*?” Marlow spluttered, and Pan turned away before he could see her cheeks boil.

Yes, Folks, believe it or not, Chelsea got her peril *and* a smidgen of romance. Okay, okay, it’s tentative, but come on! Who doesn’t love something to root for?? He is obsessed with the badass Pan and she...well...she despises him. Too jaded by the aftermath of losing people she has loved, she sees no point in making friends and getting attached, especially to the new loser who they have to lug around everywhere. But as her icy exterior begins to melt, she begins to find a little comfort in his company-He’s a goofball, but he still has a nice, firm shoulder to lean on...

Pan studied him for a moment more and he had the almost overwhelming desire to lean forward and plant his mouth on hers. It would be so easy, she was six inches away, and those lips were so full, slightly open...

“Do it and you die,” she said, reading his mind. She prodded him hard in the forehead and backed away. “Believe me, the Engine is a mean piece of work but I’m worse.”

“Do what?” he said as innocently as he could. “I wasn’t...”

“Sure.”

Apparently not one to shy away from gore (YASSSS), Smith excels in creating a truly gruesome atmosphere in which you can’t help but to cringe and go

even though you know it's coming. Well, that's a lie, that first splatter of blood had me blinking profusely, making sure I was well and truly seeing what I thought I was reading. Not one to be outmatched by slasher filled horror flicks, Smith impressed me in a way I didn't think I could be impressed-with **blood and destruction**. Bravo, Smith, I applaud you. What a pleasant, albeit disgusting, surprise.

I'm not sure what's to come with this series or where it will go, but I know that I enjoyed every single bit of the journey from page one to the end. I am not easily impressed these days by horror type books, so, to me, this was a complete breath of fresh air. I never once got the feeling I was going to be disappointed or bored with the story, and that is a common occurrence as of late. I loved the play on getting anything you ever wanted at a price...666 hours, to be exact. You get anything in the world you want....but only for that many hours, and then *they* come to collect.

Marlow smiled nervously at her and she almost felt sorry for him. Almost. The truth was he didn't know how lucky he was. Right now he was a wheezing, trembling sack of flesh and bone and worry.

And in a few minutes he'd be a god.

And I may have guessed certain events that were going to happen long before they did, but, in a way, that made me happy. I was excited to see my twisted mind went hand in hand with Smith's twisted mind and, in turn, we were weird twisted minds together. So...there's that.

So, again, I am over the moon excited that I got asked to read this story and that it was as excellent as it was. It's not often I adore my ARCs, so to open this up with a smile on my face and end it with an even bigger, more malicious smile on my face was an added bonus. If you are a fan of anything dark or ominous, or even adventurous, I'd venture to say you would probably enjoy this. As for me, I can't wait to see where it goes next. I quite enjoyed those amazing final chapters. So many amazing possibilities and wonderful directions to go...I only hope my heart can handle it.

For more of my reviews, please visit:

Ricky says

It's been a while since Alexander Gordon Smith gave us a new book, and so I went into this one with high hopes based on my previous experience with *Escape From Furnace* and *The Fury*. Maybe it's not quite as good as those books, but for what it's worth, you get exactly what you ask for going into this book - horror, action, explosions, and a creepy new mythos combining aspects of demons and djinn.

The romantic part of the story feels unnecessary and tacked on, for some reason. So that's the major reason why this book gets four stars instead of five like everything else I've read from this author. However, Marlow and Charlie's dynamic, and of course the Shan-esque disgustingness everywhere, help make up for it, and I'm pretty eager to read the next two books in this trilogy.

Rashika (is tired) says

****This review has also been posted on The Social Potato*

Immediate Reaction After Finishing Book

Hellraisers drew me in because of its intriguing premise and while I loved the world building I never managed to fall in love with the book. There is definitely potential in the series and by the end of the book, I was hooked, I just wanted more from the book as a whole.

What I Liked

World building. The idea of a machine that can grant any wish at a cost is so intriguing and the author totally did this idea justice. My favorite bits in the novel were when we got to learn more about the machine and its powers. I love the way it isn't just a fantastical thing but that it becomes scientific in the way engineers and lawyers approach it.

Lack of romance. If there had been a romance it would have been instalove and I am glad that it didn't happen. It could but right now, all we have is an unrequited crush and that's fun too because then we get to see a relationship develop as opposed to a romance that doesn't make sense.

What could have been better (i.e. things that were just okay)

The Characters. I had a really hard time relating to the main character, Marlow. I also didn't like Pan, the other main character. Marlow was hard to relate to because he had no drive. This characteristic is essential to his character so I don't know if my annoyance is a good thing or not, I do know that I wanted to shake him most of the time. It's why his development doesn't do much for me. Also he totally mistreated Charlie--his best friend--and it pissed me off. My problem with Pan was that she transitions too quickly from an ice-queen to someone who has too many feelings and it made her development almost unbelievable to me. It's kind of hard to explain and I am doing a bad job at explaining anyway so I am going to stop.

The pacing/plot. I didn't like that it took half of the book for us to finally be introduced to the world of the engine. I did like the realism of Marlow's reactions but I was so excited to just see the world of the engine (the lawyers, engineers, the actual engine, etc.) that his inability to believe started rubbing on me.

This is mostly a ‘me’ thing since I am impatient and prefer when things move quickly (although not too quickly because if a book is rushed then that’s no fun at all.) The plot was also paced weirdly in that the first half of the book took forever and the second half seemed to fly by, almost too quickly. I also felt like there wasn’t a proper overarching plot? Like I had no real idea where the book was going until the end, not because there was some major twist that changed my entire perception of the novel but because there wasn’t always consistency throughout the novel.

The difference between the ‘What I liked’ and the ‘What Could Have Been Better’ might make you think I mostly didn’t like the book but that isn’t true. I liked it okay, it’s just that nothing about it really grabbed at me and made me go **WOWZA, THIS IS AMAZEBALLS** and that’s kind of what I expected given the novel’s amazing blurb. The ending did really up the stakes though so I am going to continue with the series and see what awaits for these characters in the future novels.

Note that I received an advanced copy of this book in exchange for an honest review

Susan Angela Wallace says

The devil's engine: hellraiser by Alexander Gordon Smith is a horror and teens ya read. When a sixteen-year-old troublemaker named Marlow Green is trapped in a surreal firefight against nightmarish creatures in the middle of his New York City neighborhood, he unwittingly finds himself amid a squad of secret soldiers dedicated to battling the legions of the devil himself. Powering this army of young misfits is an ancient machine from the darkest parts of history. Known as the devil's engine, it can make any wish come true-as long as you are willing to put your life on the line. Promised powers beyond belief, and facing monstrous apparitions straight out of the netherworld, Marlow must decide if he's going to submit to a demonic deal with the infernal machine that will enable him to join the crusade-if it doesn't kill him first. From the author of the Escape from Furnace series, here is the opening salvo in an explosive new horror trilogy about an ordinary American kid caught up in an invisible war against the very worst enemy imaginable.

I really enjoyed this book. It had everything. Machine moving monsters things blowing up. Demons too. I do hope there is more to come. Highly recommended. 5*. I voluntarily reviewed an advanced copy of this book from netgalley.

Kyle says

I am very upset that I did not like this book, and that seems to be the case for many others. Yes I did have high expectations because I know the author is a great author, but there were things that happened in this book that I was not okay with.

+1 Star for the idea. First I want to say that the concept was very creative. I wish this book was re-written so that all of the parts that were not so good are removed.

-1 Star for Marlow and his entirety. There is a difference between a broken character and an awful character. All of the bad things that happened were his fault. He continued to make the same mistakes repeatedly while the rest of the characters just shrugged them off, no matter how detrimental they were.

-1 Star for the sexual objectification of Pan. I would have loved to see her as the main character! But more than that, she was only there to be the love interest, which took away from her person. Every other chapter made a mention of her body, and no matter how much she disliked Marlow, he always found a way to get her closer. I wanted to like Pan as a person but she was the object of desire instead. It wouldn't matter what she had to say just as long as Marlow was staring at her.

Now I was 15 once, and I remember how I used to look at girls, but it is not something that we should continue. Especially that he shoves her without reason and later she begs for a mercy kill and a punch to the face. Without it we would not be missing anything from the concept, and I believe that the Engine idea was interesting enough without a woman plot devise to move the story along. Hope bothered me as well, in on part she was terrified of Marlow, but then out of nowhere she is much stronger than him. Also, No other woman is described in the book appearance wise other than Pan, which assigns her as the love interest.

-1 Star for plot. Again, this was moved by all of Marlow's mistakes. Mistakes that could have easily been avoided. Also, when they wanted to capture one of the enemy, they were going after a porter that could easily escape their grasp? I will not spoil the ending but I HIGHLY doubt they would all be happy about what is going on!

-1 Star for character development. Marlow as an idiotic creep throughout the book. He was known for being the coward but that disappears randomly in the book. Night's personality is that she is Spanish, whatever that means. Pan I will admit was my favorite, other than everything else that I mentioned about her character, and Truck.....meh, he was fine. I did not get Moose or Hope as well, were they friends of everyone else or lackey's of their leader?

This book was highly frustrating and I do not see myself reading the rest in the series, unless there are HUGE changes. I am sure I will be interested in more of the authors work, but this book was a fluke and should be rewritten.

Emily May says

2 1/2 stars. I enjoyed some parts of this book, but it pales in comparison to the author's wonderful, creepy Lockdown. Which you should read if you haven't.

Smith has a talent for creating **well-developed, troubled male protagonists**. In this case, we have Marlow Green - a 16-year-old asthmatic boy who lives with his alcoholic mother and has been expelled from every school he's been to. He's immediately a flawed yet sympathetic character.

After one more expulsion, he runs away from school and tries to buy alcohol at a local store. Things don't go to plan, though, when he witnesses something inexplicable... a demonic attack. Not surprisingly, everyone he tells thinks the alcohol was doing its work. His life gets stranger and stranger from there, propelling him into a crazy world full of action and drama.

However, I just don't think this story about hellraisers has the pull that the author's other series does. In fact, I found it difficult to concentrate on the plot and very easy to put down. As with his other series, this book is being called "fast-paced" and I can't disagree. The pages are bursting with constant action scenes and chases. But, strangely, **it doesn't add up to a very compelling story**.

There are some books that do lots of dramatic things to keep the plot rolling, but it starts to feel like meandering without a goal. This was one of those books, for me. I didn't feel any connection to the people running around and fighting, which made it boring despite the fast pacing.

Also, Pan's character fell a little flat for me. She's a kickass heroine, for sure, but she never feels real or believable. She is literally just that... a kickass heroine. In fact, the only character who was really memorable for me was Marlow.

In my opinion, read Lockdown instead.

Danielle says

The Devil's Engine: Hellraisers is the first book in a new series by Alexander Gordon Smith. I read the Furnace books, so as soon as this appeared on Netgalley, I knew I had to jump on it.

Sixteen-year-old Marlow Green's life is a mess of his own doing. Once again, he's been expelled from school, and he's run out of options. On his way home, he walks through Staten Island and comes across an event he can't explain.

Marlow has a choice, join the Hellraisers, or continue his meandering path to prison. Joining the Hellraisers has a bad side though. It means selling his soul to an ancient machine in exchange for super powers. Supposedly, there is a way to break the contract, but like anything else, there are no guarantees.

Lisa Mandina says

This is my first book by this author. I know his other series, Escape from the Furnace, is really popular, and I may have to go back and give them a try now. We'll see. When I first started this one though, the beginning had me almost ready to quit. I didn't really like the characters at first, they didn't seem very nice, and there was too much action going on without any knowledge of what Pan was doing or why she was doing it. But I stuck with it, and soon it slowed down enough to give me the information I needed, and I began enjoying it more as I read.

There is definitely a bit of a cliffhanger, and I definitely need to read on and know what will happen next. There is more to learn about the engine, and this book was just full of action, with a little section where we get to know some of the background info on the engine and the groups who have worked with it. I'm ready to learn more in the next book, and I'm sure there will be lots more action!

You can read the rest of my review on my blog, [Lisa Loves Literature](#)

Morris says

I really wanted to like "The Devil's Engine: Hellraisers". The plot summary sounded promising. It also sounded very unique. Unfortunately, the promise of a good book fell flat.

That isn't to say that parts of the book were not enjoyable. The first quarter or so was non-stop action. I wanted to know more about the characters. Of course, this created an even worse disappointment when the rest of the book moved at a snail's pace. Seriously, it could have been trimmed seventy-five pages and nobody would have missed them.

There was a mystery as to what was driving the entire plot, and had the book dropped more clues it would have left me dying to keep turning the pages. As it was, by the time I got near the end I didn't care what was going on and as far as I was concerned almost all of the characters could be eaten by demons. I wouldn't have cared. I wouldn't have even sent virtual flowers to their funeral.

"The Devil's Engine: Hellraisers" may be a good choice for those who don't mind an original plot that drags out. It wasn't for me, though. The audience is definitely more mature young adults, so please be careful if you are choosing a book for a gift.

This review is based upon a complimentary copy provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Brenda Ayala says

I'm giving it 4 stars because ultimately, it was a fun read. Plenty of gore and nightmarish creatures to keep you up at night, which is always a delightful time. The front cover has a quote that says, "The Stephen King of YA horror," and I think the guy that said it is definitely on the right track.

The synopsis is pretty straight forward. These kids can do whatever they want, by selling their souls. There are people working to break these contracts so they can cheat hell out of the souls and continue living and fighting. Marlowe's gang is introduced as the one trying to save the world from literally turning into hell. The only problem is that he may not be on the right team.

That was a little difficult for me to swallow because of the bits we saw from each side. On Marlowe's side, I saw them giving themselves powers like superheroes--super strength, speed, lightning from the fingers like Darth Sidious. On the other side, there's brutal mind manipulation and bringing a person back from hell (whose body was shredded to bits then put back together). It was sufficiently hellish and nightmarish in all the ways it was supposed to be.

But then... maybe Marlowe is on the wrong side? There really isn't any indication to show me that this could actually be the case, so I'm both really annoyed at the author for ending it before showing me how that is possible and intensely curious to see what is found out. I assume all this comes in the second installment of the series, which is all the more annoying because I know I have a long time to wait. Why does everything always have to be a series now?! I want a story in one book!

I don't know. But that final scene with the demon dead girl from hell thing was garish and gross and gnarly and grotesque and all the other "G" words I didn't use. Fabulously done, I'm gonna have some of those images in my head for a long while.

Sharon says

I was given an electronic copy by Macmillan Children's Publishing Group and NetGalley, in exchange for an honest review.

If not for the inability to assign half stars, *The Devil's Engine: Hellraisers* should be no more than two and a half stars. The story of Marlow Green runs concurrently with one about Pan, a secret soldier dispatched to abort a demonic attack without alerting the normal citizens of the city. Armed with a crossbow and a small army, Pan takes on the monster and might have lost her life if not for Marlow's assistance. Yielding a shotgun from the liquor store in which he unsuccessfully tried to buy a bottle after being expelled from his third school in eight months, Marlow faces the demon and helps the team of secret soldiers. Unwittingly drafted into a war between good and evil, Marlow finds out there is more hero in him than he thought.

The action sequences explode from the beginning of this novel, but because the author does not explain what is going on until close to the conclusion, I waded through most of this book on a sea of confusion. The only character with which I could feel a connection is Marlow Green, a fifteen year old asthmatic kid who is unwittingly plopped into the middle of a battle that was previously unseen by him. Both the plot and character development take a back seat to the action, leaving me with the feeling that I really do not know much of anything about the world the author has created or its inhabitants.

Forever Young Adult says

Graded By: Mandy W.

Cover Story: Mistaken Identity

BFF Charm: Big Sister

Swoonworthy Scale: -2

Talky Talk: Immersive

Bonus Factors: Noir, Deal with the Devil, X-Men

Relationship Status: Successful First Date

Read the full book report [here](#).

Teri says

Well, the description made me request this book from NetGalley right away and while some aspects were interesting enough, it failed to meet my expectations.

The author did an excellent job of portraying Marlow as a troubled teenager who had his share of problems - difficulties in school, an alcoholic mother, lack of purpose or direction, and living in the shadow of his deceased older brother. The beginning really pulled me in and the action began almost immediately. Compared to other demon books I've read, this offered a new perspective in that the demons were almost like - transformers. That's the first thing that came to mind. The action sequences were well-developed and creative.

What didn't work for me was - all the action sequences. If that's something you enjoy in a book, this one has

plenty to offer, but it seemed as if the characters were either having down time or fighting, and there wasn't much in the way of character development, so I never really connected with them or felt like I knew them.

From other reviews I've read, this author has another series, Escape From Furnace, that is outstanding, but for me, this book fell a little flat.

This review is based on a digital ARC from the publisher through NetGalley.

Crystal says

This book is a great example of why I still finish every book I start. I've always had this problem and I've tried to stop, but then I pick up a book like this one and realize if I had stopped at 50 pages or so I would have seriously missed out. Is this book great...no but by the end it did grab me and the story line is pretty interesting so I'm glad I didn't put it down.

In the beginning, we the reader stay pretty much in the dark about what's going on in this world that Smith has created. At first I was okay with this because the story starts off really action packed and had a lot of adrenaline coursing through the words. At one point I felt like I was in some crazy Transformers from hell movie! After awhile though I just wanted to know what was going on. Contracts, Engines, souls, demons it all just didn't make sense and after 100 pages something should make sense. This was why I almost put the book down. I didn't get enough in the beginning to pull me in even though there was so much action.

Pan is who kept me reading. She is one bad a\$\$ character and I just wanted to see what she would do next. I wish the book would have been told in just her POV. The flipping back and forth got to be a tad confusing and I didn't like reading Marlow's thoughts as much. His constant thoughts on his asthma got to be annoying and he wasn't a strong enough character for me. He started out strong, but as the story went on we learn really quickly that he is just a coward and runs from everything. He does try and make this up by the end, but even with that I still wasn't connected to him like I was Pan. She was interesting from the get go and like I said the reason why I kept reading.

The story really took off after we learn about the Engine and the world that's been created. This happens in the last third of the book and for some this will be too late. I wish the author would have moved things around because the ending was so explosive and actually had me on the edge of my seat, but people won't get to this point if they aren't captivated from the get go. I hope more people are like me and will refuse to put down a book because this world is unique and one that I think a lot of people will find interesting.

One thing though if you don't like gore turn away now. Things really got icky at the end and I even had to take a moment or two while I was reading. It was gore galore and the visuals I got were just down right gross. So be prepared if you decide to read this. You can of course skip over the grossness, but A what's the fun in that and B you will miss some things so just read with one eye open.

All in all like I said I did enjoy this. I liked the cast of characters (minus Marlow which is shame because he's a main character), I enjoyed the unique story line and am interested to see where it is going, and I liked the lack of romance. Yes there is one brewing, but the world is the main focus which is just what I like in my reads these days.

Shadowdenizen says

Alexander Gordon Smith certainly has a talent not only for creating believably-dysfunctional teenage protagonists, but also for breakneck storytelling. Absolutely no time is wasted in establishing the premise of this series and dropping Marlow Green (our "hero") into the thick of things.

Unfortunately, in this instance the total is not greater than the sum of its parts. This book lacks the creepy, atmospheric cohesion that the Furnace series provided. There's a lot of action and people running around in this book, but it's a bit jumbled and seems a bit contrived to me; I was just expecting a better overall payoff.

Additionally, while I've always enjoyed the "Be Careful What You Wish For" theme, I was hoping to see more of that played out in this book- but maybe that's to come in the following books? I also liked the *other* underlying theme of "The Price of Power"; another thematic element I hope is played out more in the following novels.

So overall, while quite readable and entertaining, Hellraisers ultimately failed to live up to my expectations from the author; maybe it's because the author set such a high bar with the "Furnace" series, that this book couldn't possibly live up to it?

I'll give this a solid 3 stars. (Full disclosure: with many thanks, I received a copy of this from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.)
