



The Shadow Throne

Jennifer A. Nielsen

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One war. Too many deadly battles. Can a king save his kingdom when his own survival seems unlikely?

War has come to Carthya. It knocks at every door and window in the land. And when Jaron learns that King Vargan of Avenia has kidnapped Imogen in a plot to bring Carthya to its knees, Jaron knows it is up to him to embark on a daring rescue mission. But everything that can go wrong does.

His friends are flung far and wide across Carthya and its neighbouring lands. In a last-ditch effort to stave off what looks to be a devastating loss for the kingdom, Jaron undertakes what may be his last journey to save everything and everyone he loves. But even with his lightning-quick wit, Jaron cannot forestall the terrible danger that descends on him and his country. Along the way, will he lose what matters most? And in the end, who will sit on Carthya's throne?

The Shadow Throne Details

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From Reader Review The Shadow Throne for online ebook

Connor says

A good conclusion to the trilogy. The second is still my favorite, but I enjoyed seeing where all of the characters would end up.

Alexa says

The first book in this trilogy is better as a stand-alone than with the other two. The second was good enough. This... I felt like I wasted my day reading it.

There were so many obvious twists, it was sort of pathetic. The main character felt sort of bland at this point. It also seemed like it was trying to be an actiony-adventure war story, but at the same time trying to apologize for making war look interesting, with what felt like throwaway lines about how horrific it all was. All in all, it just felt generic, like it was just going over well-trodden territory. I expected a lot more after the wonderful first book.

It also seemed ironic to me that the author mentioned in the acknowledgements a quote from Toni Morrison saying that if the book you want hasn't been written yet, write it yourself. I can think of so many books, comics, movies, etc. that have done a similar story, but better. It's been written.

That said, the first one is definitely worth reading. Just not this one.

Katie says

My reaction when I saw that cover:

I can't wait.

I will legit break down.

I need this book.

I need it now!

COME ON GUYS! ONLY 4 MORE MONTHS!!!!!!! WE CAN DO IT!

I lied. I can't wait this long.

The cover; IT'S TOO AWESOME FOR WORDS!

I'm going to start crying.

CRYING BECAUSE IT WILL BE EPIC!

I WILL RUN ALL THE WAY TO BARNES AND NOBLE IF IT MEANS I WILL GET THIS BOOK!

Alright! We are at 23 days and counting. SO EXCITED!!!!

OK YA'LL WE ARE AT 15 DAYS!!!!!!!!!!!!!! :)

We are at 6 days. WE CAN DO THIS EVERYONE!!! STICK TOGETHER

Really, though, there's only one reaction that can express this feeling.

EDIT: Finished it yesterday. FANTASTIC ENDING TO A FANTASTIC SERIES!!!!!!!!!!!!!! No spoilers though :) Seriously, Jennifer Nielson, I would love love LOVE LOVE LOVE for you to write a new book.

EDIT (Apr. 2016): Wow so many likes :) thanks guys! Seriously though, I would contend that this is one of my favorite series and Nielson is an absolutely great author! After rereading it multiple times I still absolutely love the book!

Lonna | FLYL?F says

Original Post: *The Shadow Throne* at FLYLeF (www.flylef.com)

IT'S ALWAYS QUITE bittersweet to reach the end of a series, particular one that I have enjoyed thoroughly and has tucked me into bed quite soundly in the early hours of the morning. *The Shadow Throne*, by Jennifer Nielson, is the final installment in *The Ascendance Trilogy*. And, it does NOT disappoint!

Though born into royalty, life has been anything but easy for Jaron. From outwitting Connor Bevin's treasonous game in *The False Prince*, to conquering the Avenia Pirates in *The Runaway King*, Jaron returns in *The Shadow Throne* as the Ascendance King of Carthya.

But...War is here.

And, it's here with a vengeance! Three countries launch simultaneous attacks on Carthya with King Vargan of Avenia stopping at nothing until Jaron meets his demise, including the kidnapping of Imogen. Conflicted, Jaron must choose between his kingdom or his heart.

Everything that could go wrong...does. Imogen is imprisoned, the Princess Amarinda is missing, Roden and Tobias are flung far and wide across Carthya. In a desperate attempt to save his country and the people he loves, Jaron embarks on a daring, if reckless, attempt to change the course of the war. Despite the terrible disadvantages that Jaron constantly faces, there is always an undercurrent of something more than Jaron lets

readers on. And as the outcome of the war changes its trajectory many-folds, reads will be left guessing until the very end who will be victorious.

By far, this Jaron has been quite enjoyable to read. The loss of those dear to him, the positive people he surrounds himself with, and the responsibilities that he shoulders as king, have groomed him into a remarkable young man full of compassion and some humility. Though, readers will still enjoy his lightening-quick wit. I found myself passing the time in my son's martial arts class, giggling like an idiot, to Jaron's remarks punctuated precisely at the right moment in the storyline to deliver the perfect punch line.

It is a difficult thing – to write an ending that appeals to everyone. The last few chapters felt rushed, with a highly unexpected twist that came out of nowhere with a particular foe. Regardless, Ms. Nielson writes with such fervor and excitement that she has a fan in me. Until your next book Ms. Nielson...

Amy says

I should make a new shelf called 'books-that-kill-me-slowly-with-their-absence'

narrows eyes

MARCH 2014?

JENNIFER NIELSEN, IS YOUR PLAN TO MAKE ME SUFFER?? CONGRATZ. THAT IS WHAT YOU ARE DOING.

...2014!?

ONE ETERNITY LATER

I HAVE READ THE SHADOW THRONE FROM COVER TO COVER.

cries

May I say this 1000% met my expectations of overwhelming amazingness!!!

cries more

THE SERIES IS OVER, AND SO IS MY JOY

But, AH-HA, is that a new series I hear in the distance???? THE PRAETOR WAR????

No one plays with my emotions quite like you, Jen.

Daphne says

Oh Jaron. You never cease to amaze me.

Favorite Quotes:

"Nobody gives you respect in this life. You must take it, you must earn it, and then you must hold it sacred, because no matter how hard respect is to attain, it can be lost in an instant." I nodded my head toward the garrison. "Go get it, Roden. People won't follow a leader who doesn't know where he's going. Show them that you do." Pg. 43

"It's your storm, and the future of us all depends on you now. So who are you? Sage, an orphan boy who cares only for himself? Or the undisciplined, rebellious prince your father sent away? Life has tested your

resilience and strength and willpower, and you have succeeded in ways nobody ever thought possible. But the storm has never been worse, and it will either destroy you, or define you. When everything is taken from you, can you still stand before us as Jaron, the Ascendant King of Carthya?"

Pg. 166

"Rulers aren't made just because they sit on the throne. A true king serves his people, protects them, and sees to their happiness if he can." Pg. 224

"Your test has always been the same. Be stronger than whatever life brings at you. You will rise from this." Pg. 244

Karla says

Not sure what all else I can say about this book. But like any good high fantasy finally, it ends making you feel all warm and fuzzy inside. I love this series, perhaps because of Jaron, who is literally one of my favorite characters that any one has written. And I love his plots and schemes, I love that he always has a plan yet never has a plan. I love a lot of the other characters. Sometimes I wish there was more detail in some of the descriptions (like about Connor) and plots, but over all I think the brevity is also one of its strong points. All and all a good ending for this series but I'm not sure it was as great as the other two.

Muse-ic ? says

Favorites!!! Because it was awesome and it's the final installment in one of my favorite trilogies of all time that you guys should **TOTALLY** read!

Buuuuuut I had to remove a star for this one.

As much as I loved this book, I had to deduct a star because too many things were too perfect, convenient, and well-timed for our characters.

Jaron is a smart guy. Really! And he plans things so far in advance. But literally the combination of events that took place were about as normal as all the planets in our galaxy lining up with the sun in 3-D space!

(view spoiler)

I loved the ending, but half the events that lead to it weren't believable.

But I LOVED IT! Seriously I can't express this enough. READ THIS TRILOGY!

The adventure, the dialogue, the characters, the everything! I can't even I love it so much!

Jaron isn't a book boyfriend, but I love him anyways. I was kinda pissed that (view spoiler)

Me in response to this whole series:

I will forever cherish this trilogy ♥

Thank you Jennifer A. Nielsen and I really really really hope you write more awesome books!!

Sincerely,

Sandra

Robin (Bridge Four) says

The Shadow Throne ends our journey with Jaron and company. It answers the questions will Carthya be saved and who will sit on the throne once and for all. But even though Jaron is as snarky as ever this final books had a little something missing for me. There was a large chunk in the center during the war that I lost interest in and I often wondered how many times Jaron could go rushing into some enemy camp just to be caught and tortured.

“Avenia thinks they're battling a king. I doubt they're prepared to fight a boy who thinks childish pranks are practical strategies for war.”

For a king of Carthya Jaron spends almost no time in the Palace and he seems to always be tromping off to do the things he is supposed to as king send others to do. It does make for an interesting story to have the King sneaking around in the forest playing with the enemy a little like Robin Hood. I liked the times that Jaron is free and working with his friends to win the war. He actually has some friends now and that is a complicated thing for him.

“Villains and plots and enemies are simple things to me. But friendships are complicated, and love is harder still. It has wounded me deeper than a sword ever could.”

But there are problems with the book. Specifically the pacing in the middle. It became a bit of a trudge for me as they are in the middle of the war. I lost complete interest in the book. The other problem is how indestructible Jaron became. He is caught and tortured and practically at death's door and then poof he is running, fighting, climbing the cliffs of insanity. It was just too much.

I liked the last 10% maybe more than the rest of the book. The wrap up was done pretty nicely. But this was my least favorite of the series.

Jeff says

A very satisfying ending to the trilogy, I wish a bit more time was spent at the end of the book instead of a kind of abrupt summation, it felt right. I found this book to be a bit predictable to a certain extent, and I did notice some repetitions in regards to situations the characters find themselves in. However given what this trilogy is, I enjoyed it very much. I really enjoyed the characters, the plot isn't super deep, but I think the ability for the author to make the reader connect with the characters rectifies that. Anyway overall a great,

quick and fun trilogy read. Unfortunately the first of the trilogy was my favourite but none the less the second and third were good in their own regard!

Rachel Maniacup says

My heart is aching while I'm writing my review on the final sequel of this series because it's hard to say goodbye to the books/novels you've been deeply attached with, especially with the best characters you'll surely miss..

In here, Sage's character had grown strong because of his anger to what had happen to his country, that he plunges himself into a dangerous, reckless (as usual) attempt to save his country, his friends and the people he loves as he face the **WAR** from three different countries/kingdoms. And though I've been used to him, getting away with everything and out-witting even the most clever adult, I couldn't help feeling nervous and scared for him(*I have been clinging to my arm rests and was sitting on the edge of my chair while reading this*) because I couldn't imagine how he could get himself out of this absolute trouble he got into.

But then, again, I loved how the author crafted a remarkable ending in this trilogy! And though I felt that the last five chapters had been rushed a bit, I couldn't deduct a star because the story ended just the way I perfectly wanted, particularly the amazing friendship and the simple romance in this series. (view spoiler)

Josiphine/Tessa says

headdesk

I loved the first book. I liked the second.

This one made me want to scream loudly and publicly and then spear it to the wall with my knitting needles.

Nielson's writing wasn't up to par. The entire book consisted of telling versus showing and I was just bored. Look at my read dates. It took me a month to read it because I was reading a copy at B&N and I didn't care enough to go back sooner. I also live an hour away from B&N, but if I was really desperate I could have wrangled it.

I wasn't really desperate. I didn't care. The book is one pointless, meaningless battle after another with stupid junior high pep talks interspersed (always on horseback as they race from place to place) throughout. The sap and mushiness in this book killed me.

Jaron's ideas would never hold weight in the real world. They weren't believable and they depended way too much on outside influences. Every good con artist knows that if you aren't doing it yourself, you shouldn't depend on it.

The next paragraph has vague spoilers

But by far the worst thing was an-event-that-shall-remain-unnamed. It happens early in the book, like the third or fourth chapter. I was shocked and stunned and so impressed that Jennifer Nielson would take such a risk that would anger so many people. Well. (view spoiler) If she had stuck to her guns, the magnificence of what she had done might have redeemed this book for me. The other problems are still glaring, but that would have been a turning point for this book and me. As it played out, though, it was a turning point in the wrong direction.

I was so angry when I finished this book. I wish I hadn't read it. If I could take it back, I would. I consider it a complete waste of my time.

Okay then. I'm so angry my hands are trembling. I think it's time this stops.

Lindsey Rey says

[3.5 Stars]

Gavin says

I enjoyed the first two books in *The Ascendance Trilogy* , but I did not enjoy this final instalment of the series quite as much.

Jaron is now King of Carthya, but he must learn how to lead quickly as Carthya is being invaded by three separate neighbouring countries. The most difficult of the invaders, Avenia, are lead by the vengeful and greedy King Vargan. To complicate matters even further King Vargan has kidnapped Imogen, the girl who Jaron loves. Jaron, with the help of his friends and allies, must find a way to repel the invasion and rescue Imogen.

The story was OK, but nothing special. I found that I was never overly excited by any of the happenings. Though I suspect that could be because they all had a very familiar feel. There is only so many times Jaron and his friends can get captured by their enemies and then escape before it starts to get tiresome! The other big issue I had was that the war story arc was a bit dull. I preferred the parts of the story that focused on the witty banter between the characters and some of the other light adventure sub-plots.

I was happy with the way things wrapped up for Jaron and the host of secondary characters that we have grown familiar with over the course of the series.

Although this final book was a bit dull I'll remember this children's fantasy series fondly.

Rating: 2.5 stars.

Audio Note: Charlie McWade was not at his best in this one. I thought he was overdoing things at times. Though I'm not sure if that is his fault or if that is just the way things were written!

bibliophile (Romance Addict) says

******4.25 STARS!******

I'm quite *shocked* honestly.
I really enjoyed reading this novel.
It was ~~kind~~ of dark.
Had a lot of clever plans made by Jaron.
Made me giggle with *excitement*.
& *definitely* had my eyes sweaty.
I really **like** it.

“Nobody gives you respect in this life. You must take it, you must earn it, and then you must hold it sacred, because no matter how hard respect is to attain, it can be lost in an instant.”

This is the third installment of The Ascendant Trilogy by Jennifer A. Nielsen. The first book is The False Prince, followed by The Runaway King, and lastly The Shadow Throne. The trilogy started out when Jaron was scouted by Connor to take the role of the lost prince of *Carthya*. Jaron is just an orphanage boy, and he's far away from being a prince. However, with Connor's help, is he going to succeed?

I'm very happy to see how much this trilogy has covered. When I started out reading this, I honestly didn't expect anything, but by the end, I'm very glad I read this. This is a children/Middle Grade trilogy, yet it had some very dark elements. Jaron is definitely too smart to be a fourteen year old boy. The reader got to see character development from so many characters. Imogen, Amarinda, Tobias, Roden, Mott, and even Jaron himself.

“One of the greatest kings?” My smile widened. “That’s it? Why not the greatest?”

“This will only make your arrogance worse, I’m sure.”

“Really? Do you think that’s possible?”

The world building of this novel isn't very different from our world, but I still noticed how *unique* this world was. The writing is rich and clear.

I'm very happy I finished reading this trilogy, and since it's easy to go through, it definitely helped me in getting over my reading slump.

Recommended to all readers!

Jon says

Check out Scott Reads It for reviews, giveaways, & more!

It's such a bittersweet feeling when you have to say goodbye to one of your favorite series. I only became a fan of The Ascendance Trilogy recently, but I know this is one of those series that will stay with me for years to come. Jennifer A. Nielsen has written one of the best fantasy I've read in years and I really hate to say goodbye to beloved characters like Jaron and Imogen. Though it saddens me thinking that this trilogy is over, I absolutely loved the way the conclusion unfolds and The Shadow Throne ends with such a bang. The Shadow Throne is a worthy end to a series of this caliber and the finale is absolutely perfect.

Oh Jaron, how I will miss you and your shenanigans. Jaron is one of my all-time favorite male protagonists and he's up there with legends like Harry Potter and Percy Jackson. Jaron is so clever and I admire how he always manages to outwit even the sharpest adults. He has an endless surplus of courage and determination and his intense loyalty towards his friends is unbelievably incredible. There became a point in TST where I just couldn't handle how Jaron was taking so many risks and putting his life on the line, but I knew that it someone had to take these risks to save Carthya.

The Shadow Throne is an emotional hurricane and readers will absolutely need a plethora of tissues while reading this book. I had so many feelings surging through me while reading TST and all of them while reading. Readers will need to emotionally prepare themselves for this one because there are just so many heartfelt, powerful moments. Nielsen has really created such vibrant characters that readers absolutely love and seeing them face any sort of conflict is truly painful.

The romance in this series has been pretty light and The Shadow Throne adds a bit more of a romantic angle to the plot. The romance between Imogen and Jaron is simple, sweet, and I just love the way Nielsen handles it. Nielsen doesn't move the plot forward using the romance, nor does she make the romance the focus of the story by any means. This is a series about a kingdom in chaos and the romance is a sweet little treat in the midst all of the kingdom politics.

I really love Jaron and Imogen because they truly complement each other and their relationship is an equal healthy one. Jaron accepts that Imogen is a strong-willed, courageous women and that doesn't distort his feelings for her in any way. Imogen is such a clever heroine and literature needs more tough female characters that kids can look up to.

I absolutely loved The Shadow Throne and it's such a fitting end to a brilliant series. The Ascendance Trilogy is one of my all-time favorite series and I'm so excited to read Nielsen's upcoming The Praetor War. I definitely think you should start The False Prince because if you haven't, you're missing out on a superb series! This series isn't really for those looking for romance, but I know that readers looking to be captivated by action and adventure will fall in love with The Ascendance Trilogy. The Shadow Throne is everything I expected and just so much more, I will definitely be rereading this series in the future because it's just that great.

Eilonwy says

Ugh. My reaction to finishing a book should not be, "Oh, thank goodness that's over!"

This is possibly a three-star book on its own merits, but compared to the first two books in this trilogy, it was a real disappointment. As this aimed for a darker and more serious, mature story line to wrap up Sage's character development from trouble-making boy orphan to a capable, adult king, it lost most of the humor, charm, and cleverness that were such highlights of *The False Prince* and *The Runaway King*. His unreliable narrative wore thin for me, and a lot of the material felt recycled rather than surprising. And with the land of Carthya suddenly at war with all its neighbors, the story was a bit grim, which didn't make me eager to keep picking it back up.

(view spoiler)

I still recommend the first two books. But read this one only if you must know every last detail that gets Sage to the fairly predictable happy ending.

haley says

After the first book, the series rapidly went downhill, IMO. I absolutely adored the first book. It was a five-star, gold medal, 1st place brilliant perfection. Second book was a bit of a disappointment, but nonetheless enjoyable.

Then *The Shadow Throne* happened. And I am so, terribly disappointed in how subpar this is when compared to the brilliance of *The False Prince*.

Firstly, let's talk about Imogen for a second. Actually, a bit longer than a second, because I have a lot to say about her. I don't like her. At all. In fact, I hate her. Her mere existence angers me. An editor should have seen that her character serves absolutely no purpose other than to be a bland and boring love interest. She should not be allowed to exist.

So, as callous and bitchy as this may sound, I was sort of happy when (view spoiler)

Speaking of Jaron, I feel like that clever, sarcastic, mischievous boy we all know and love from the first two books was replaced by his evil twin. Jaron's not a mischievous but likable kid in this book, he's just plain stupid. How do his plans even work? They shouldn't but somehow, they do. And I hate how everyone just worships Jaron and follows all his orders without question. Trust me, the kind of shit Jaron pulls off would not fly with me.

Okay, another big issue; the ending. Everything is all wrapped up in a neat and tidy package and (view spoiler) essentially everyone lives happily ever after and all the kingdoms are at peace! And all that shit happens in one freaking chapter. NO, that is NOT how you end a book. Sure, happy endings are great but I do NOT want everything to suddenly be perfect.

One positive thing about The Shadow Throne was that there is a lot of action so it's easy to read and it doesn't drag or anything.

So, I decided on two stars. I originally gave this book three stars out of loyalty to the first and second book, but two stars more accurately reflects my feelings.

Justine says

I thought this was a really good finish to the series.

I listened to this on audio with my kids, and the narration was excellent. Yes, maybe the story does tie up everything a little too neatly, but hey, it's middle grade fantasy, and it does that genre very well. My kids actually clapped as we listened to some of the final scenes, so that right there is worth something.

The series as a whole is very enjoyable, and I loved being able to experience it with my kids.

Erica says

Dear Universe,

I have just finished reading The Shadow Throne, so you may not want to talk to me for a while. And unless you want to hear me jabbering about the sheer awesomeness of Jaron, Mott, and Amarinda, I don't want to talk to you either. You see, this book delivers. Remember in the first book of the trilogy, when Jaron fooled us all with his unreliable narrator skills? Remember the second book, when we bashed our heads into the pages shouting, "What are you doing, you stupid boy? You'll get yourself killed!" Well, the third book is that on steroids. Remember how Imogen was always there to support him, whether that meant cleaning his wounds or hiding kitchen knives so he'd always have access to a weapon? She'll make you cry now. Remember clumsy but brainy Tobias? Remember proud and loyal Amarinda? Guess who ends up together. Remember the pirates? Yeah, this book has more pirates. My only disappointment was that they stayed on dry land the entire time. I would've liked to see them at sea.

Jaron is back, and he's the same snarky, savvy boy you grew to love. Even when his life gets put through the wringer, even when everyone he loves is ripped away from him, even when there's no hope for the future- he's always got a plan. You may think you know what happens next but he'll prove you wrong.

The ending is action packed and heartwarming all at once. Now, if you'll excuse me, I need to go read over my favorite parts. Goodbye, Internet!

Sincerely,

Erica
