



Everfound

Neal Shusterman

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While Mary lies in a glass coffin aboard a ghost train heading west, her minions are awaiting her re-awakening by bringing lots of new souls into Everlost to serve her. Meanwhile Jackin' Jill has met Jix, a fur-jacker—a skin jacker who can take over the bodies of animals, most notably jaguars. Jix serves a Mayan god who collects Everlost coins, and has his own agenda. In the concluding volume of The Skinjacker Trilogy, Neal Shusterman reveals new sides of the characters of Everlost, who are pitted against each other in a battle that may destroy all life on Earth.

Everfound Details

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From Reader Review Everfound for online ebook

Seth says

THE FOLLOWING REVIEW CONTAINS SPOILERS FROM EVERLOST AND EVERWILD

OHMYOHMYOHMY. This book was SO FREAKIN GOOD. I finished it just this morning, and I pretty much haven't stopped thinking about it all day. Let me first just tell you some things about Neal Shusterman--HOLY FREAKIN MONGRELS!!!! He's a genius of EPIC PROPORTIONS. I've read a lot of his books (Skinjacker Trilogy, Unwind, Bruiser, Downsiders, The Dark Side of Nowhere, Full Tilt, both Antsy books, and I *think* that's it) and EACH and EVERY one of them was positively intriguing. The best were the most recent, of course (Skinjacker, Unwind and Bruiser) but the others were great too! His writing/plots/characters haven't, don't, and will not cease to amaze me. He knows how to make a person care about the characters and the world they live in.

I feel so emotionally attached to Everlost. I've been a fan since the first book. But each time they just got better and better! In the first book, Neal had just touched on the depth of this fine world. He hadn't explored all of the fantastic possibilities of living in it (as becomes evident in book two and three, when you are literally BLOWN AWAY by all of the crazy, fantastic and ingenious plot twists). There's so much to think about in a world like Everlost. Even in all three books, there's so much more to think about. Every time something crazy would happen in this book, I'd have to set it down and think about the billions of possibilities that Shusterman had opened just by saying one, simple thing.

I don't think I've ever been (or will ever be) able to say this about any book series besides Everlost/Everwild/Everfound: *Every* single character, throughout the entire series, plays an important part in the master plot of the books. If you took ANY character out, it would change the entire series in drastic and dire ways. So, I'll try to explain this to you through talking about some of the characters:

Nick, "The Chocolate Ogre": He's an obvious one. He's the main character, along with Allie. It's interesting how much he changes throughout the series. In Everlost, he begins to lose himself when Mary tries to pull he and Allie into the ruts that all her children are in (besides, of course, her). In Everwild, he's becoming a monster made of chocolate who, in the end, is nothing but a big pile of fudge. And in Everfound, he's a (view spoiler) He plays an obvious role in the vitalness of the plot, as does every decision he makes along the way.

Allie the Outcast: Ahhhh. She's so freakin awesome. In Everlost, she helps transform the McGill, the only true monster of Everlost, into Mikey McGill, the boy she falls in love with in Everwild. Also in Everwild, she becomes even more awesome when she learns the art of Skinjacking. And in Everfound, (view spoiler)

Mary (Megan McGill) Hightower: Oh wow. Well. A few words that come to mind are: Evil, insane, twisted, and . . . loving. WHA?? What do you mean, Seth, Mary's not loving she's a wicked beast! And while that is true, you're also failing to see her true intentions. So, she wants to destroy the Living World and rule Everlost--but why? For her children. For all of the children of the world, really. She sees the Living World as an evil place, and wants to help every single soul she can and bring them to Everlost--to take from away from the pain, the hurt, the evils of men. So, in Everlost, Mary's seemingly not a villian, enough so for Nick to fall in love with her. Until the end, of course, when her true plans are revealed and her and Nick go her seperate ways to battle for the children of Everlost. She, the kSy Witch, and he, the Chocolate Ogre. In Everwild, she collects her children and discovers the art of reaping, and develops a love for Skinjackers, for completely selfish purposes. And in Everfound, (view spoiler)

Mikey McGill (HEAR MY NAME AND TREMBLE RAHHH!): Mary's evil little brother--NOT! Only in Everlost, but Allie tames him with fortune cookies, and Mary forces him to see a picture of himself, so he has to be a normal little boy (Which is okay, cuz Allie likes him better that way!). In Everwild, he learns to be a monster again with the help of his own internal conflict (and a skinjacker named Milos who helps that along!). And in Everfound, (view spoiler)

Milos: UGH I HATE THIS KID. You think he's good, then he goes and reaps to his hearts content under Mary's orders and freakin FALLS IN LOVE WITH MARY. What kind of idiot would do that?!! (Heh heh. Poor, poor Nick.) He irks me even more so in Everfound,(view spoiler)

Squirrel & Moose: Poor, poor them. They're both idiots, I feel bad for whichever one of them was(view spoiler)

Gaaah. I really was planning to go through a bunch of characters, but I really don't feel like it! But one that was kinda cool--(view spoiler)

Josiah says

“In short, there are mysteries of science and of soul that will never be understood no matter how hard we measure, no matter how strongly we believe, no matter how deep our think tanks and how high our aspirations. But as anyone will tell you—for we all know this within our hearts —the impossible happens and grand cosmic mysteries are solved on a regular basis, although most of the time the solutions lead to even greater mysteries.”

?Everfound, pp. 488-489

Trilogies in young-adult literature may be fairly common, but I'll tell you what isn't: trilogies in which the first volume soars to rarely explored heights of fine art, the second book clearly outdoes the first in every way, and the third is greater still than even the second, fit to be included on any list of the most magnificent novels of its generation. The *Skinjacker* odyssey is just such a trio of books, an epically wrought story of such perfect proportions that it would be very difficult to find another three-book set to which it could even be compared. Right here, right now, within these very pages I hold, I suspect that Neal Shusterman may be at the absolute peak of his writing ability, and what that peak has produced deserves comparison to the work of any other American writer I know.

I once read that Neal Shusterman doesn't consider any of his manuscripts to be finished until he's somehow made it better than *Unwind*. Though that may be an impossibly high standard to match, he certainly has made a real go of it again and again, producing such stunning masterpieces as *Everwild*, *Bruiser* and *Everlost* over a period of just three years. For most writers, those three books alone could constitute a worthwhile writing career, ensuring them status as a true legend of literature for as long as the stories stayed in the public eye by remaining in print. Neal Shusterman continues to press on, though, reeling off novel after novel that accomplishes the incredible double feat of parlaying the favor of the madding crowd while still containing

the depth of soul and spirit that marks all of the most lasting literature. I don't know how he does it, but I'm so grateful that he somehow finds a way.

Creating suspense in *Everlost* had to have been a challenge; after all, no physical harm could come to the Afterlights, since they were already dead. The second book in the *Skinjacker* trilogy, *Everwild*, really mixed things up, though, by integrating certain parts of *Everlost* with the living world so that both the living and the dead could actually be affected by each other in ways that hadn't previously been revealed. Allie's secret, in particular, really rocked the boat, as truths that we had previously accepted turned out not to be all they seemed, and the world of *Everlost* as we had viewed it to that point expanded to include more than we ever could have known. Suddenly, more was at stake here than just Allie, Nick and the Afterlight companions they had picked up along the way "getting to where they were going" on the other side of the tunnel of light. This seemingly unchangeable existence in a world whose inhabitants gradually forget everything about their former lives among the living wasn't entirely unchangeable anymore. The way back wasn't as impossible as it seemed, and that made *everything* different.

As Milos and the remaining number of Mary Hightower's kids head west on her train, with Allie tied to the front as a form of showy punishment for her actions in trying to confound Mary's plan, Mikey McGill is still losing precious time trying to get Nick to remember himself. Mikey may have been able to reform Nick into an actual living form out of the mess of pure chocolate that he had become, but the new version of the Chocolate Ogre bears little resemblance to the person he had once been, strong enough of mind to have resisted the allure of Mary Hightower even after falling in love with her. This new Nick is something of a simpleton, but he's all that Mikey has at his disposal, and he's his best chance of working toward a final confrontation with Mary at some point down the road.

So, what do these converging story trails have to do with Johnnie-O and Charlie sailing around in the *Everlost* version of the great *Hindenburg* dirigible, too high up in the skies to have any impact on the apocalyptic power struggle taking shape below them, too high up even to jump down from the massive aircraft without getting sucked beneath the earth's surface into the center of the planet? What role could a far-off king of *Everlost* have to play in the story, a king whose power to hold other Afterlights in subjugation to himself stems not from any special physical strength, but from the elasticity of his mind? I must say that I was surprised when I first learned that *Everfound* was five hundred pages long. Neal Shusterman is a marvelous writer whom I had no doubt could spin fascinating fiction for the entire duration, but it wasn't until I got into the story that I completely understood the need for such a lengthy concluding volume to the trilogy. There are so many connecting factors to this book, little things that one might never have thought could possibly all hook together as vital parts to the central story, but it really does all fit, and pretty much perfectly. It would take a master to get all of these pieces to work together in harmony, and a master is exactly what *Everfound* had in the person of its author.

You don't need me to tell you any more about this book. Neal Shusterman's genius is a commodity that no one who truly loves literature should miss, and *Everfound* is one of the most brightly shining examples of all the greatness that he has brought to the genre of young-adult and juvenile literature, opening up new worlds to us that we never could have found on our own, emotionally involving us in his stories to an extent that few authors will ever match. *Everfound* is one of the best books I've ever read, and I can't encourage other readers strongly enough to pick up volume one of the trilogy, *Everlost*, and embark on the journey themselves. I promise that after reaching the end of the final book, you'll never be quite the same again.

Rachael says

It could be the end of the world as they know it. Even though Mary Hightower has yet to be awakened from her glass coffin, her accomplices are doing their best to serve her and her grand plans—bringing the entire world into Everlost. And so Mary’s loyal followers reap new souls by preventing recently deceased children from getting where they were going and ultimately “saving” them. At least, that’s how Mary sees it. But not everyone agrees with her, and it soon becomes apparent that Mary’s crew will have more than just familiar enemies to deal with. Can the dissenters put aside their differences to fight against Mary, or will she be successful in orchestrating her vision of a worldwide Armageddon?

I have to say that I quite enjoyed Everlost and Everwild, but I was completely blown away by Everfound. This conclusion to Shusterman’s spectacular Skinjacker trilogy was its longest and most memorable installment by far. There is so much danger and drama already in the world of Everlost, as detailed in the first two books of the trilogy, but Shusterman introduces many new and exciting complications. There are whole hosts of new Afterlights to be reckoned with, new vortexes and objects with formidable powers, and new ties between Everlost and the real world. The sheer amount of imagination evident in Shusterman’s writing simply astounds me; I doubt many other writers could incorporate bodily possession of animals, physically living within two worlds, and a prophetic jukebox into a story as skillfully and realistically as Shusterman does in Everfound. What’s even more impressive is how he does this while maintaining completely believable if eccentric characters and situations. This trilogy was such a pleasure to read that I am truly sad that it is coming to a close. It’s an epic story of life, love, and death that will keep readers on the edge of their seats until the very satisfying end.

I most definitely recommend the Skinjacker trilogy to any fans of fantasy and especially to readers who enjoyed reading Jo-Jo and the Fiendish Lot by Andrew Auseon and the Escape from Furnace series by Alexander Gordon Smith.

reposted from <http://thebookmuncher.blogspot.com>

Sean says

Everlost was startlingly original, Everwild was just a shade darker and more complex. Everfound is perhaps, too ambitious. I truly enjoyed the book, but this review only covers why I gave it three stars instead of five.

Shusterman takes a huge leap down the dark rabbit hole of sinister children’s fiction. It feels too very sudden, too overwhelming. I felt the abundance of plot lines boxed me into choosing one character to truly invest in and treat the rest as tangents. The decidedly more sinister tone felt like sandpaper at first. In comparison, Harry Potter took a measured approach over five books before the story matured into a dark, menacing tale. Everfound weaves too many elements into a suddenly morally ambiguous plot. Hundreds of children are murdered with wild abandon. Every main character falls in love with another main character fairly early. It was something I didn’t enjoy about the previous book and I was disappointed by how easily undying love was achieved effortlessly by these children. It seemed like a thinly veiled attempt to make these children seem more grown up instead of writing truly mature characters.

I knew Shusterman was capable of giving me the moral queasies after Unwind. But this was a little too much for me coming off the heels of Everwild.

If you read the first two, you really should read *Everfound*. It's a quick read and overall it is honestly enjoyable with few speedbumps to slow you down.

Thomas says

Everfound is one of those books you really want to write a fantastic review for. The kind of book which, after you've turned the last page and finished digesting the final words, you want to tell everyone about. The kind that you find yourself grasping for straws to explain, stumbling over nothing but your lack of adequate vocabulary to express its perfection.

Or maybe I'm just tongue-tied. That's not the point, though.

I won't bother with explaining the story - it's just too complicated and intricate and nuanced, especially because this is the third and final installment of the Skinjacker trilogy. If you're looking for the first book in the series (which I hope you are, at least by the end of this review) you can find it here. Now, back to *Everfound*.

Neal Shusterman is the king of young-adult science-fiction and fantasy. Every book I've read by him, be it the Skinjacker trilogy, *Unwind*, or *Bruiser*, possessed an original and well-executed plot. He outdid himself with *Everfound*. Not only did he flesh out the already wonderful world of Everlost further than I thought possible, but he took the events happening in the story and enmeshed them with the setting, creating a colossal battle to save the world.

Another reason why I adore Shusterman's books is because of the characters. They're so layered and complex - like real people, I guess. There's no archetypical bad guy craving for pure power to dominate the world, but a girl named Mary, who wishes to protect her children in Everlost, even if it means destroying the living world and all of its inhabitants. There's no "Peggy Sue" protagonist who is never tempted by her own desires, but a skinjacker named Allie, whose passion for performing acts of kindness is fuddled by what she truly wants.

There are so many more characters worth mentioning. I even feel bad calling them side characters, because each one contributes something essential to the story. Every single teenager or child Shusterman brings into the world of Everlost serves a purpose, and most experience some form of emotional growth or development.

To sum it up: if you've already read the first two books in the Skinjacker trilogy, then I probably don't need to tell you to read this one. If you haven't read *Everlost*, you should, because it's a great introduction to a mind-blowing series. Who knows, maybe you'll end up like me - finishing up *Everfound*, and at an utter loss of speech.

*cross-posted from my blog, the quiet voice.

Afton Nelson says

I think this book tried to do too much. Too much story, too much detail, too many characters, too many plot lines. It's almost as if the series could have gone on for 2 or 3 more books, but the author decided to cram

them into one, just to be done with it. Favorite characters had to take a backseat to the development on new ones. There was information overload both in reminding the reader of the world building from past books as well as introducing new concepts. Some of the details seemed lazy. I actually had to set the book down when a teen pop star named Rhoda Dakota made a brief appearance. I just didn't find myself entranced in this alternate world like I did in the previous books. Nor did I care as much about the characters.

Melanie says

This book was epic. There's no other way to put it, it was an absolutely epic ending to a really awesome series. It's quite a bit thicker than the first two books, but it's worth every page. The plot was intense, and gives you quite a chill at times. With the back-and-forth war with Mary and Allie/Nick/Jix/others deciding the fate of everyone-the living and the dead. It was also quite funny at times too. Neal Shusterman's world is as exquisite and spell-bounding, yet terrifying and dark. Mary makes the most perfect villain, probably the very best I've ever read. Her own deluded sense of what is right and wrong makes her ever so dangerous but understandable, and it made a lot of sense that she was the one who had to decide her fate; sinking down into the center of the earth. I'm not sure if I understood what it meant to be there, but the interlude thing suggested that it was a place where the secrets of the world are all known. The partings were painful, but beautifully written. When Mikey and Allie parted- well, that's when I started to cry, because it was so sweet. "I'll be waiting for you". It doesn't get any more perfect than that. I supposed they always had to part, from the moment we found out that Allie was still more or less alive and well, where Mikey was dead. I loved how the author never told us what was in the light, keeping that lovely mystery, and leaving the reader to think for themselves what it was. (although I did want to find out!) In a way, I feel really sad about Nick, how the one that he loves is gone, and he must remain in Everlost forever to guide more children. He changed so much as a character, and if anyone deserves the light, it should be him. I hope he gets to retire after awhile, and there will be a new leader. When Allie woke up- I felt so many conflicting emotions. "I'm sorry I was gone for so long", was, of course, a great line, for her mother, who has gone through so much pain. And Jix and Jill... I hated Jill in the first books, but love changed her. Jix and Jill were so sweet together- it feels perfect that they can get eternity together, or until they both go to the light. The skinjacker trilogy is a tale of love. Of how it can change a person for much better, or for much worse, and of how love conquers all. I know that's sappy, but what can I say? This book was perfect. :)

Brigid ☆ Cool Ninja Sharpshooter ☆ says

I can't do this book justice. I can't. I've been putting off this review for two days and thinking about this book non-stop and I still don't know what the heck I'm supposed to say! I haven't felt this emotional and mind-blown by a book since I read *Monsters of Men*, which is the third/final book in the incredible *Chaos Walking* series by Patrick Ness. *Chaos Walking* has been my absolute favorite series for a while now, but after reading *Everfound*, the Skinjackers trilogy might just be competing for that title. And that's a bit surprising, since when I read the first book I found it weird and at first didn't like it much—and even though I was hooked by the end and liked the book over all, I didn't have tremendous expectations for the sequels. But then I read his book *Unwind* (not part of this series) and was completely blown away. After that, I knew Shusterman was capable of some pretty effing amazing stuff. And even though the second book, *Everwild*, was fantastic, I wasn't sure Shusterman could ever write anything that would impress me as much as *Unwind* did.

But I think he finally accomplished it with Everfound.

(Although I gotta say, I adored his book Bruiser, but not as much as Unwind or the Skinjacker trilogy.)

Everfound. Everfound. Everfound. Where do I begin? This book is just plain astounding.

It was so good, I actually tried to eat it. And that's something new, even coming from me. I mean, I do weird things to books I love. I yell at them, I hug them, I throw them against the wall, I "SQUEE!" at them ... but not once have I ever tried to eat a book. When I finished Everfound, all I could do was hold it in front of me and stare at it weirdly like, "Wait ... This book. It can't be real. It's too good to be real." And then this strange urge came over me and I actually decided to bite it, because I didn't know what else to do. It was just like, "GET IN MAH BELLY, YOU WONDERFUL BOOK YOU! I WANT YOU TO BE A PART OF ME!" But I couldn't actually eat it, sadly. Also it was a library book, so I would have gotten in trouble for that.

Anyway, as you can see, I am just stalling really. I haven't even said anything about the book yet. I'm still not sure where to begin. This is too hard. I'm going to end up crying.

Well, if you haven't read the first two books, there's not much of a point reading this review ... (OH MY GOD, I JUST GOT MY IPOD TOUCH IN THE MAIL. I HAVE BEEN WAITING ALL WEEK. Sorry, random. I'm just excited so I thought I'd include that in there. Uh, I'll get back to this review in a second.)

So, where was I? Oh yeah. EVERFOUND.

As I was saying, if you haven't read the first two books, there's not much of a point in reading this review. (Besides to hear me yelling at you, "GO READ EVERLOST AND EVERWILD, DAMMIT!") So, go off and read them. Even if you've read the first two (and not this one) you might not be so interested, since the rest of this review will probably be me talking about how awesome each character and event in this book is. And it will involve a lot of spoilers.

Just know that, if you've read the first two books, you won't be disappointed by the third. I thought it couldn't get any more amazing—but oh, it does. It does.

Let's start with the easiest part, and that's praising Mr. Shusterman himself. Neal Shusterman. NEAL SHUSTERMAN. I LOVE YOU. I WISH YOU COULD KNOW HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU. WHERE ARE YOU? I NEED TO TELL YOU THAT I LOVE YOU! I don't care how stalkerish I sound. I really mean it. I must meet Neal Shusterman someday and tell him how much I love him.

He is just one freaking fantastic author. I haven't been able to write for the past few days because this book made me feel like my own work is a pile of barf. This is the kind of amazing I aspire to be someday.

One of the first rules of writing is "Show, don't tell"—which is a lot easier said than done. It's very hard to show things without spelling them outright. Shusterman, however, is a genius at this. The best example I can pull right out of my mind is when one of the Skinjackers skinjacks a pregnant woman and then tells another Skinjacker, "I wanted to know what it felt like when the baby kicks." And Shusterman doesn't say anything more than that. He doesn't have to say, "This is sad, because since she died when she was a kid, she'll never have a child. How tragic." Seriously, that one simple sentence was like a punch in the stomach. It almost made me cry, because it made me realize just how sad it is that the Afterlights have missed out on so many good things in life. And they're all so young and innocent that they might not even realize it. It's just so, so sad.

What also impresses me about Shusterman's writing is his close attention to detail. It's almost ridiculous. I read a lot of books that have interesting premises, but the ideas aren't totally fleshed out, or there are a lot of questions that are never answered. Most authors don't seem to have the patience to fill in all the details. But Neal Shusterman does. He freaking does. There is so much detail in his ideas, one could almost believe they were true—and that places like Everlost actually exist. Like, he thinks up details that even I as a reader would never think of. With most books I'm like, "But what about this? Or what if this happened? And why is this never explained?" But with these books, I was always like, "Whoa ... I never even thought of that. But it makes total sense." Gah, I can't even explain it. But if you've read it, you (probably) know what I mean. It's awesome.

Now, the characters. Oh my gosh, THE CHARACTERS! There are so many of them, and I love them all. I don't even know where to begin. Usually in a book with so many people and so many perspectives in it, there's always at least one character who I don't like or don't relate to—or otherwise don't really care about at all. I can't think of a single character in the Skinjacker trilogy like that. I can't even count how many characters there are—and there are a lot—but they all have a place in the story and I love them all.

Well, we'll start with the more obvious characters.

First of all, I love Allie. She's so determined and brave, but at the same time she is such a relatable teenage girl. I mean, there are so many recent YA books where the "average teenage girl" is portrayed as being a whiney, needy, selfish person whose only desire is to get a boyfriend. Allie, on the other hand, does not only think about herself. In fact, she does the opposite. She does what she needs to do in order to protect all the other Afterlights. She's not completely self-sacrificing, but she puts herself at risk when she needs to—not to be the hero, but because she knows it's right. She just has this simple sense of right and wrong that makes her realistic and lovable.

And of course, her relationship with Mikey is amazing. Mikey has changed a lot since the first book—in which he was the terribly frightening creature, the McGill, until Allie brought out his good side Beauty & the Beast style. In Everfound he is still very devoted to her—but you know, not in a creepy, overprotective way. But one thing I love about them is that, even though they're a couple, they still have their arguments—which is much more realistic than the typical, swoony YA romance. And when they argue they're so dang cute. I loved this one scene where Mikey was upset with Allie and he just ran off into the distance and (literally) exploded a few times. And she and Nick just watch him and Allie's like, "Aww, I hate when he explodes." Ha! So adorable.

Speaking of Nick, he is also awesome, and he has also developed quite well. In the first book he was like a little puppy dog, all lost and confused, and dedicated to Mary (just like everyone else). And then he became the Chocolate Ogre and basically forgot everything, then throughout the third book we watch him become human again as he realizes what's important to him, little by little, and as he comes to terms with who he is and what he must do—especially when it comes to facing Mary.

Ohhh, Mary. Mary, Mary, quite contrary. OH GOD. Where do I begin with her? She has got to be one of the best villains ever—although it feels weird to call her a "villain" even, because it's such a one-sided term. She is such a complex and fascinating character. It's astounding how Shusterman can create a character who is full of such evil intentions, yet so human and easy to understand. In the beginning, all she wanted was to guide the other Afterlights, never knowing that her personality would draw all of them to her—and that suddenly, she'd basically have this entire empire beneath her. And with all that power, it was only a matter of time before it started going to her head and making her want more. She does some truly despicable things, especially in Everfound, in which she takes innocent lives and makes other Afterlights sacrifice themselves

for her—just because she knows she can make anyone do anything for her, and because she knows she has the power to gain more and more followers. For most of the book my teeth were practically grinding together, I hated her so much. But at the same time, I couldn't hate her too much, because she's Mikey's sister and Nick is still sort of in love with her. So, AGH! Shusterman was able to keep the reader from despising her completely, because it's obvious she initially had good intentions and could be a good person. She has incredible leadership abilities; unfortunately, she doesn't know how to use them the right way. But it's not as easy as, "HEY EVERYONE! LET'S GO KILL MARY!" because a) everyone is so brainwashed into liking her, and b) Mikey and Nick are so conflicted about defeating her, since both of them could potentially help her become a good person again. This makes the tension throughout the third book absolutely riveting. I had no idea how on earth Shusterman was going to end it, and how/if Mary was going to be defeated. Let's just say, the ending was something I didn't see coming—although I probably should have. But it was perfect.

Milos is another very complicated character. I liked him in the beginning of Everwild ... and then started hating him, and throughout this book, I pretty much hated him. But the sad thing is, it was all because of his obsession with Mary, even though she would never love him. It doesn't excuse all the horrible things he does for Mary, but I do feel bad for him. (view spoiler)

So, that basically covers the most important characters who have been in the previous books. Now for the new characters!

First of all, there's Clarence, the so-called "scar wraith"—an old man who is only halfway part of Everlost because of an accident, and who can destroy Afterlights by touching them. Firstly, I have to say that the idea of the scar wraith is a really really cool idea. One of those aforementioned ideas I would have never thought of. At first, he just seems like an insane, cranky old man—but as he gets swept up in all the madness, he develops in an unexpected but interesting manner, becoming a very sincere and lovable character. (view spoiler)

Then ... JIX! OH MY GOD! JIX! *FANGIRL SCREAMS* If I were but a few years younger, I would totally be in love with him. Unfortunately he's a bit too young for me—although I'm not sure exactly how old he is. Oh, well. I'm still obsessed with him. I mean, he speaks Spanish and he is part jaguar. What is sexier than that? I mean, I guess being part-cat is a little weird, but I pictured him looking kind of Na'vi-ish, so you know ... not so bad. *Ah-hem* But, sexiness aside, he is also an awesome and well-developed character. Throughout the book, we see him struggle between what is right and wrong.

And then of course, there's Jill (going back to old characters ... but I had to mention Jix and Jill together) who I initially hated, but who was so awesome in this book. Jix and Jill are the cutest thing. Before, Mikey and Allie were by far my favorite couple in the series, but I think Jix and Jill stole that title. They are just too dang adorable. (view spoiler)(view spoiler)(view spoiler)

ALRIGHT, done analyzing all the major characters. There are loads of others, but those are the most noteworthy ones in my humble opinion. I warned you I loved them all too much. Errrm. Or did I?

Anyway, back to praising the book in general.

So, the ending. Gahhh, the ending. I almost cried, like three times. But it was bloody brilliant. He couldn't have written a more powerful, beautiful, moving ending.

(view spoiler)

Over all, I love how detailed and complex and thought-out this series is. You really just have to read it to experience it, because my words cannot do it justice. Although the subject matter is so heavy, there are few books that have given me so much joy and hope. Neal Shusterman balances out the tragedy with humor and love. He makes the reader realize how, in order to live, we must understand death. And, without threatening any specific beliefs—that is, he neither confirms nor denies the existence of Heaven/Hell and God—he gives us hope that death may be a new beginning and not just an ending.

I really can't think of anything to criticize. And if you've read the majority of my other reviews, you know that's saying A LOT. Really, this book moved me so much. I don't think I've ever said this about a book before but ...

It. Was. Perfect.

Neal Shusterman says

This isn't actually a review, because it would be weird to review my own book – but I thought people might be interested in knowing some of the things that went on in the writing process -- sort of a deconstruction of how the book was put together.

I'm going backwards – that is beginning with my most recent books, and working my way back in time, since the most recent ones are more fresh in my mind.

EVERFOUND.

This was a tough one to write. I learned from writing SHATTERED SKY, that the third book of a trilogy is ridiculously difficult. In the first two books, you create all these story lines and characters, and by the time you get to the third, it becomes so unwieldy, it's hard to wrangle it all in. When I began Everfound, I knew where it was going. Sort of. I knew it was all going to culminate in this grand battle between Mary Hightower, and our heroes, (I won't give too many details, because they'd be spoilers). The question was, how do I get there. How do I weave in Charlie and Johnny-O, who are adrift for most of the story in the Hindenburg, circling the world. How do I bring Nick and Mikey back together with Allie? And what is the grand event that gives the reader the breathtaking conclusion I want. I decided early on that I would not settle until each of these books was better than the previous one, so I had a tall order for EVERFOUND.

My first problem was the fact that I found myself more interested in the new characters, Jix, and Clarence, than I was with the existing characters. Not because I don't like the existing characters, but it's more fun to explore the lives of new characters than revisit the ones you already know. My first battle was to not let Jix's story take over the entire book, which it kept wanting to do.

Originally I had envisioned a whole major part of the story taking place in Atlantis, which still exists in Everlost, but it became very impractical to go there. It only gets a brief mention. Much more interesting, and doable was the great Mayan city of Chichen Itza, the ruins of which I visited while writing the book as part of my research.

About halfway through the book, I hit a major block – which usually happens in the middle of any book I write, but this time it was a real killer. I just couldn't figure out how to bring the threads together, or even where it was all leading to anymore. I went on a three day writing retreat, taking a cabin aboard the Queen Mary, an old ocean liner that's permanently docked in Long Beach, CA. It's classic Art Deco style, and its history of ghost sightings made it the perfect place to write a story about dead kids. Let me tell you, the hallways, and deserted old salons are amazingly creepy! I sat in one of those old titanic-like dining salons to

write. What great ambiance!

For two days I labored to break through my block, but kept throwing away what I wrote. Then, when I was in deep despair, thinking I was at a dead end, I woke up in my cabin at 3:00 AM, and I swear to you, the rest of the book started playing like a movie in my head. The puzzle pieces all fell together! I knew what had to happen, where it had to happen, and how it would happen! I was so excited I couldn't sleep, so I got up and started writing, and didn't stop until noon, when I practically collapsed from exhaustion! The suffering was worth the epiphany!

What I'm really proud of with EVERFOUND is how the climax works. My goal was to make it all fit together like the gear works of a watch. Every single character plays a crucial part – if any of those characters aren't there, then the whole thing would fall apart. Nothing is left to chance, every single character is part of a larger whole that they can't see – but when it fits together, the cascading series of events in the climax was fantastic fun to write, and I hope you'll find it fun to read, too!

Trudi says

**BRAVO! OUTSTANDING! EPIC ADVENTURE! SHEER DELIGHT! HEART STEALING!
HIGHEST POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION!!!**

***An open letter to Neal Shusterman (please pardon me while I squee my head off):

Dear Mr. Shusterman (or can I be so bold as to call you Neal?) After completing the Skinjacker Trilogy I do feel like we are old friends and maybe even knew each other in a previous life. Also, I could kiss you smack on the lips and that seems to call for a first-name familiarity.

My first introduction to the Everlost realm charmed me to the very tips of my toes and to the very ends of each strand of my hair. The tale's sheer originality enthralled me from beginning to end. You could say I got lost in Everlost (and loved every nail-biting, white-knuckled moment). There is sadness in this story of dead children who lose their way "into the light" and find themselves stranded in this in-between place. Their journey of discovery is filled with child-like wonder, fear, and yes, even horror. Sometimes, *especially* horror.

Could the sequel ever live up to its predecessor? I approached it with caution and much trepidation, but what the hell was I worried about? For you, Neal, had so much more in store for your readers yet. What joy to be swept up in an epic adventure! More delectable characters are introduced while the ones we have come to know are pushed even further to their limits. The fascinating world-building continues, the details delicious, the page-turning pace sublime. The tension of Book 2 builds to a crackling crescendo and a maddening cliff-hanger. How long would you make us wait for Book 3????!!!

Fortunately, not that long (you could teach Mr. George R.R. Martin a thing or two about deadlines I daresay). *Everfound* is everything it should be and everything I hoped it would be. I don't say that lightly (though I'm still feeling a little giddy and light-headed in the glow of having just turned the last page). You sir kept such awe-inspiring momentum going through all three books only to ramp it up OFF THE CHARTS in this final installment.

You really were saving the best for last weren't you, you magnificent bastard? Not once did you have to repeat yourself, not once did you have to milk a great idea for extra points, you STILL had new stuff to show us, you STILL had places to take us that we've never been or imagined. I could not guess how it was going to end, I couldn't even be sure you wouldn't break my heart. "Edge of my seat" seems too trite and overused an expression, but that's where I was Neal -- *on the edge of my seat*.

Before I close I would like to sneak in here some of the other elements that make this trilogy so great -- how it tackles the meaning of life and what makes life so precious in the first place -- that it's memory and remembrances of things past that make us who we are. Yes, you've given us a grand adventure Neal, but you've also given us a part of your heart I think. For I feel much love went into these novels, and that I am certain is what makes each of them worth loving right back.

And just in case there was any doubt left -- I do love them, all of them, very very much. My sincerest thanks for introducing me to Everlost, taking me on this marvelous adventure, and getting me home safe again.

Forever yours,
Trudi (should we ever meet, you can definitely call me by my first name)

Matt Oliver says

Ever found is a book that when you read it truly makes you think about what is happening in the world. Neal Shusterman plays out the book in a way that appeals to teens, although not in a childish way. It appealed to me because how all of the main characters in this book have a different personality and a certain story to them.

The most intriguing part of this book is how Shusterman talks about basically, a limbo for kids. Many of them are lost and Nick, the protagonist in the story, helps them "get where they are going". Mary hinders their process, and even wants to end the living world just so she can enjoy having many children in her control. Nick and his team of skin-jackers, shape-changers, and even a scar wraith try to end Mary's journey to become the queen of "The Middle Realm" and stop her by any means. This book introduces a couple more characters into the book that add a twist in the plot. One of them is Jix, a skin-jacker has has professionalized himself to skin-jacking jaguars. He works for the king of the "City of Souls", a representation of the mayan culture in Everlost.

The main guideline of the book is Shusterman talking about if maybe there is life after death. This book manages to talk about one of the most controversial topics, without even whispering a hint of religion. I believe this book is truly a great novel.

Will M. says

I promised myself that I would try to finish a series or a trilogy this 2016, and I'm glad that I did it. I normally just read the first book of a series and leave it hanging for next time. It also normally ends up being left hanging forever in most cases. I'm going to try to change that bad habit from now on.

This third and last book is amazing. Shusterman managed to wrap things up nicely. None of that cliche stuff with this trilogy. The characters are fully developed and all the plot holes got answered nicely. I liked how the ending happened. It wasn't forced or formulaic in any way, for me.

Most of my friends rated this 5 stars, but sadly it's a 4.5 for me, rounded down. While the ending was good and original, it wasn't mind blowing. I almost gave this 5 stars because of what happens in the middle. The whole thing felt like a rollercoaster ride, but unfortunately the end of the ride winded down. I'm glad though for the outcome of most of the characters, but it wasn't enough for me to garner it a 5-star rating.

4.5/5 stars. One of the best YA trilogies out there. You need to read Shusterman, and I don't care how old you are. I'm 20 years old and I still managed to enjoy this trilogy a lot.

♥ Susan says

Love it. Sad to see it end. Hope for life beyond the trilogy?

Duffy Pratt says

I liked this book even more than the first two, and I found the ending almost completely satisfying. Mostly, Shusterman has done a wonderful job at creating a fantastic world, and then filling it with a host of memorable characters, from Ally the Outcast, to Mary Hightower the Skywitch, to Nick the Chocolate Ogre, to Mikey McGill the one true monster of Everlost, and even down to more minor characters like Jix, Jackin Jill, Milos and even ones like Speedo or Moose and Squirrel.

There are points of the book where Shusterman is just showing off and having fun, and these are truly funny. One that comes to mind is a short account of Vary's misadventures since the first book, when he flips from Atlantis to Pompeii to the Titanic, and so forth, and gets kicked out of each. It's hilarious stuff.

In this book, Mary becomes almost wholly evil and unlikeable. But Shusterman never loses sight of the fact that she is actually a tragic figure in the old sense. She was destined for greatness but is the victim of her own tragic flaw. In her case, the main flaw is her absolute certainty that she is right, and Shusterman seems to hint that this might be the main source of evil in general.

Most of the end of this book takes on the same flavor I imagine Nick to have: bittersweet. But that is my favorite kind of chocolate, and it fits well with this kind of book as well.

There is one fairly serious flaw I found with the book, but it doesn't detract from my enjoyment of it: (view spoiler)

Amy says

EDIT 8/15/11

So today I finished *Everfound* and um...words? They do not suffice.

PRE-READING

I shall be needing to know the conclusion to this amazing story, of a psychotic and demented power-hungry girl, of a once-human boy made of chocolate, of dead girls and a Russian boy who can steal bodies and come

back to life, of a boy who can turn into a hideous monster at will, of ghostly cities of majestic buildings long gone, and of a fascinating world of countless unexplored mysteries and spine-tingling, heart-pounding adventure. **NEEEEEED.**

Daniel says

Hi

Nurshafiqa says

i wanted to read this book slowly, relishing in the awesomeness of neal shusterman bit by bit. but i can't. everfound was so damn good. in fact, i skipped class and stayed at home the whole day just to finish it.

one word to describe the final book to the everlost trilogy: amazing. duh. not expecting any less from mr. shusterman. it was like a roller-coaster ride, full of ups and downs. it was thrilling and heart-breaking and exciting and funny and everything a good book is. i even found myself wondering, too many times actually, if maybe, everlost, or something like it, exist. like how cool would that be?! that's how believable the story is. strangely reminded me of peter pan and the lost boys and neverland.

the ending was QUITE satisfying. i was unhappy about what happened to certain people, but i guess that's life.. we can't always get what we want. but can someone explain to me what *really* happened to nick? anyway. when i finished reading everfound, it feels like i've lost some really good friends. they'll always live inside my heart, though (okay, i'm sounding sappy. gross).

5 stars. just go read this already!

C.P. Cabaniss says

Neal Shusterman knows how to write captivating and fascinating stories. This was a wonderful conclusion to an intriguing story with beautiful characters, a unique and complex world, and plenty of discussion regarding love and morals.

All of the characters get an ending. Some of them very satisfying and other bittersweet. The main conflict from the three novels is finally resolved. There are more places and things in Everlost from history that make me laugh and picture what this world would be like. I do wish that Nick had been in here a bit more, but his parts toward the end were perfect. Mary was creepier than ever. A great conclusion.

I'm going to do a series review on my blog, so stay tuned if you're interested in checking that out.

Robin (Bridge Four) says

Trilogies usually go one of two ways for me. I'm either disappointed that the author didn't tie up a loose

ends and rushes the story so it doesn't feel completed, which is disappointing. Or at the other end of the spectrum everything is done nicely and everyone is moving on starting there new lives having triumphed and I want to desperately have another book to find out what happens next. But rarely, just rarely an author is masterful and is able to end the story with you feeling like yes I went through that and I know where their lives are going, I'm okay to say goodbye to this world, story and characters, this is where we should part ways and I feel good about it. This is one of those trilogies, where I went for the ride and it was fantastic, I loved the world the characters and story. It wasn't all a happy endings but everything seemed to come out as it should be at the end and I felt okay when I put the book down.

This is a fantastic wrap up with all the old characters from books 1 and 2 and just enough new elements added in to keep it interesting fresh and fun. I forgave people I didn't think I would, I hated others more than I had and some endings were so unexpected that I really didn't see it coming but later thought how could it have ended any differently for them. It is an epic journey for Nick, Allie, Mikey and Mary full of unexpected turns of events and absolute horrors for the sake of a cause. I really don't want to give much away because there was so much and it unfolded so perfectly.

Neal Shusterman really has a way of telling a story that is layered. There are deep undertones to his entertaining stories that really make you think and sometimes you don't realize he has pushed your buttons until long after they have been pushed. I empathized with Mary because she truly believed what she was doing was right. I hated Milos for following Mary and later I felt so bad for his fate. Nick and Allie are always easy to root for and I think their fates ended perfectly. Mikey came a long way from the monster he used to be and his time with Allie was so special, they were written perfectly for each other.

Honestly this is one of the best middle grade YA trilogies I've ever read.

Melanie says

This was the best book of the Everlost series. Maybe coz it has more humour? I dunno but having a baby like Chocolate Ogre was seriously cool. This is the last instalment of the Skinjacker series and it is sooooooooooooooo imaginative. I love how everything clicks up in the end making me feel surprisingly pleased at the end. I said in my last review on Everwild that I hated the romance but this is what I also loved about this book. Not everything might be right in the end for Jix, Jill, Allie, Nick, Mikey or Mary, but it makes this book more realistic. Love it!<333
