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A Darker Shade Of Magic: A Novel (Shades Of Magic)



Synopsis

A Darker Shade of Magic, from #1 New York Times bestselling author V.E. Schwab is one of the last Antari magicians with a rare, coveted ability to travel between parallel Londons; Red, Grey, White, and, once upon a time, Black. Kell was raised in Red London and officially serves the Maresh Empire as an ambassador, traveling between the frequent bloody regime changes in White London and the court of George III in the dullest of Londons, the one without any magic left to see. Unofficially, Kell is a smuggler, servicing people willing to pay for even the smallest glimpses of a world they'll never see. It's a defiant hobby with dangerous consequences, which Kell is now seeing firsthand. After an exchange goes awry, Kell escapes to Grey London and runs into Delilah Bard, a cut-purse with lofty aspirations. She first robs him, then saves him from a deadly enemy, and finally forces Kell to spirit her to another world for a proper adventure. Now perilous magic is afoot, and treachery lurks at every turn. To save all of the worlds, they'll first need to stay alive. "A Darker Shade of Magic has all the hallmarks of a classic work of fantasy. Schwab has given us a gem of a tale... This is a book to treasure." — Deborah Harkness, New York Times bestselling author of the All Souls trilogy Shades of Magic series 1. A Darker Shade of Magic 2. A Gathering of Shadows 3. A Conjuring of Light At the Publisher's request, this title is being sold without Digital Rights Management Software (DRM) applied.

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Customer Reviews

Warning: this review contains spoilers. This book has a bit of the flavor *Neverwhere* by Neil Gaiman (especially since they're both set in London) as well as some of the urban fantasy by Emma Newman or Ruthanne Reid yet it stands on its own with some unique world building. Four Londons, Grey (weak magic), Red (healthy), White (starving), and Black (dead), like sheets of paper superimposed on each other. Doors between worlds, often in a tavern, and you have to move through them in order. Different rulers and different languages were in the different Londons and different geography inside and outside of them. The Antari, blood magicians, a dying breed down to the last two of their kind, Kell and Holland, as different from each other as you could be. They knew the speech of the blood magic and could speak to blood, to life, and through the blood commands, control the magic. Kell is an intriguing character, originally an implement of the Red London royal family but who grew to be almost a part of the family. Lila, a street thief, with grandures of piracy, has a bit of magic in her as well and the bravado to carry off the rest. Lila was setup to be somehow related to the royals in Red London. I was surprised that Lila's last name was "Bard" because I thought that "Rogue" or even "Ranger" would've been more appropriate. I liked Kell's magical coat that by reversing left or right would take an a completely different appearance. "How many coats do you suppose there are inside that one?" "I'm not exactly sure." There were several languages (other than English) present. English was the common tongue in Grey London but the "royal" language in Red London. Red and White had their own language of which small samples were presented. In addition, the language of the blood commands had a large number of samples but not enough to develop a grammar and dictionary. The climax happened rather quickly and I'm still not sure where the serpent came from or why Athos couldn't control it since he created it. This is one of the few Kindle books in which I found no typos or grammar errors. Very rare.

Before I knew anything about this book, I knew this cover art. Being a bookstagrammer, this is a well-loved series among the community and this cover is to die for! It made me curious and drew me in. Needless to say, before I read a single word, I had already purchased the first two books in the series. At that point, all I could think was "I sure hope I love these books!" Suffice it to say, I was beyond pleased with this book. Schwab is slow to introduce each character, but it is a slow-burn

that, once gaining momentum, never slows down. I have read the negative reviews claiming flat characters and a slow story and I can say that for me, I found nothing of the sort in my reading. Kell, Lila, Holland, and the cast of characters were so richly written for me that I felt like I knew them, understood them, felt their joy and their pain and sorrow. In addition, the world was so well explained that I'm pretty sure I could be a London's tour-guide if need be ;) However, Schwab does not bombard the reader with page after page of world-building exposition. Rather, she seamlessly weaves it into the story in a way that works perfectly. The story is unlike any fantasy I've come across, the characters are wonderful, and the writing is brilliant. If you are a lover of fantasy, don't pass up *A Darker Shade of Magic*. It will be sure to take you on a fantastic journey.

Spoilers below! I really enjoyed this book. It had a few parts that I could have done without and a few things in the end that I can probably call is going to happen in the second book. One word: Holland. Plus a few other things. I liked Lila's personality and that she was always so up beat for growing up like she did. Kell was a spoiled brat compared to her and he showed that in the way he sulked around and was so reckless when traveling. I like how Schwab explained the traveling aspect of the book like pages in a book. It's all the same world just different dimensions stacked on each other. Interesting. I liked this book enough to read the next one that's for sure.

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