



## The Shadow and Night: 1

*Chris Walley*

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In the first book in the epic Lamb among the Stars series, author Chris Walley weaves the worlds of science and the spirit, technology and supernatural into something unique in science fiction. Twelve thousand years into the future, the human race has spread across the galaxy to hundreds of terraformed worlds. The effects of the Fall have been diminished by the Great Intervention, and peace and contentment reign under the gentle rule of the Assembly. But suddenly, almost imperceptibly, things begin to change. On the remotest planet of Farholme, Forester Merral D'Avanos hears one simple . . . *lie*. Slowly a handful of men and women begin to realize that evil has returned and must be fought. What will this mean for a people to whom war and evil are ancient history? Thus begins the epic that has been described as "If C. S. Lewis and Tolkien had written Star Wars."

*The Shadow and Night* was previously published in two volumes: *The Shadow at Evening* and *The Power of the Night*.

## The Shadow and Night: 1 Details

Date : Published January 21st 2011 by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. (first published October 1st 2006)

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Author : Chris Walley

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## From Reader Review The Shadow and Night: 1 for online ebook

### Margaret Chind says

Chris Wally, the Welsh geologist, teacher, and writer may be found many places... Sometimes Wales, Lebanon, and northern England for a few, but also on Wikipedia, Facebook, and his own area of webspace his website and his blog.

This week the Christian Science Fiction & Fantasy Blog Tour for February is The Shadow and the Night by Chris Walley. This tour will run through from Feby. 18-21. Click on any of the links below to see other participants in the tour's input.

The Shadow and the Night is speculative fiction, pure and simple, learning "to fight evil without becoming evil." This book and the following sequels are not children's fiction. For me personally, I have never read a book quite like it and I must admit, as I am not finished, it is quite difficult to put down, because of the curiosity factor of what else and what next this author has put together. I find that reading something in the words of the author does well to sum some things up, or rather to at least touch to topic.

The book is The Shadow and Night, the first part of the trilogy whose overall title is The Lamb among the Stars. The two succeeding volumes are The Dark Foundations and The Infinite Day, which will be published in June 2008. Several things need noting. The first is that the tagline "in the tradition of C. S. Lewis and J.R. R. Tolkien" was given (not by me) to the books as much to mark out that they are British fantasy not in the tradition of J. K. Rowling (and Phillip Pullman). Yet Lewis and Tolkien are important influences. In terms of material, Lewis' science-fiction trilogy is perhaps these books' closest neighbour, and in terms of their scale and scope, a debt is owed to Lord of the Rings. Another point to be noted is that these books are neither a conscious imitation of, nor a reaction to, any existing work. The idea for them goes back nearly a quarter of a century and the first few chapters were written as long ago as 1988. In other words, the predate Pullman, Potter, and the Left Behind series.

To understand the theology of the story of the book, he has put together a great webpage "Puritans in Space". Overall, what I can tell you at this point is that Chris Walley has put together a story that all persons of intellect that enjoy a mind bending adventure will be pleased. For me, it is something that I could envision on something like the sci-fi channel, but at the same time couldn't, because it is so new and so different. I really like the way one tour participant describes it...

Imagine a perfect world. A world with no sin, no war, no murder, no theft, no need for law enforcement or weapons. A world where everyone believes in and worships the one true God. A world totally at peace. Farholme is just such a place - a man made world in the distant future many light years from earth.

Chris Walley has done a superb job of creating a perfectly believable world with characters that have depth and whom you come to care about.

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### **Matt Bianco says**

I really enjoyed this trilogy. It looks like a set of four, but books 1 and 2 have been combined into book 1. The Shadow and Night describes a world around 12,000 years into the future, where the Lamb reigns. There is no sin: no lying, cheating, stealing, murder, adultery, nothing. Yet, Merral, a forester on the farthest planet from Earth, Farholme, hears a lie uttered. Upon investigation, he and a visitor from Earth, Vero, discover a foreign spaceship and its crew on Farholme--having brought with them the return of evil. Together, they battle these creatures to defeat the threat they represent and the evil they've brought with them. This evil is a spiritual evil that affects the everyday lives of the humans living on Farholme, causing them to sin in ways humans have not done so for 12,000 years.

Although the early pages of the book make you feel as if Walley is trying too hard to convince you that the galaxy has been thoroughly Christianized, he does write well throughout. He brings in Biblical symbolism, and generally leaves it to the reader to discover on his own, with a few annoying exceptions.

The best part is the development of Merral's understanding of evil and how it has impacted him, his friends, and his family. The way he analyzes his tone, his words, his feelings, and his behaviors makes him endearing and lovable to the reader. This, at least for me, makes me want to imitate him in that. I feel like this is the type of book that serves as a type to the reader for how we should treat and interact with others. Not in a preachy way, but in an inspiring way.

A friend described this as postmillennial science fiction. I'd have to agree.

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### **Emily says**

Overall, I loved the plot of this futuristic, Christian society of planets and the slow, subtle infiltration of enemy forces into the the most remote planet. The author took great care in creating the government and society, but somehow the characters seemed rather flat. At first I thought this was because they lived in a sinless society and therefore had no flaws I could relate to, but even after I kept reading I still didn't warm up to any one. Also, the few lighthearted scenes in the book seemed a bit awkward and forced when they were supposed to be humorous. I will be reading the rest of the series, but for once its for the plot not for the people. I also had trouble deciphering some of the definitions of "Sin". The society in the book is so perfect that somethings they clarify as sin are not called so by even the most strict Christians of the real world, such as a ambition, and a need for privacy, which is equated with lying. This nitpicking made it a bit hard to realize that evil was threatening them until it became actual sin, such as prejudice, actual lying, and hatred. It's a good read, but a bit hard to get through until well midway when the plot begins to thicken.

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### **Tish says**

The book was not that engrossing for me. I found it to be more work to read this book than anything.

Parts seemed to go on forever. I did like the idea of it taking place so far into the future. The created society on the new planet made sense and I enjoyed the detail the author put into the story. The story was presented

very well and I could visualize what was going on. The characters added to the story. It was interesting how this society was dealing with evil and how of course, lead to my thoughts of whether a complete elimination of evil is possible.

The book does not shy away from the fact that God is the focus of their lives, but it also does not beat you over the head with religion, in my opinion.

Additionally, the conclusion of the book was satisfactory, but I was happy it was over.

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### **Chris Griffith says**

Good stuff here! Star Wars meets The Puritan Hope. A bit long and descriptive in some places but that comes with the territory when you're writing a postmillennial Christian science fiction work which takes place 12,000 years into the future on another planet! Merral D'Vanos, a reluctant hero finds his world spinning into a downward spiral of encroaching subtle deception. Explores the invasion of sin and the struggle against evil. The writer, Chris Walley is a Welsh geologist. This volume is a combo of parts I and II. Part III is called Dark Foundations and Part IV is entitled The Infinite Day. Can't wait to read the entire series!

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### **Megan Lane says**

I may change this rating later... I need to think on it a bit more. But this is how I feel right now.

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### **John says**

This is "in the tradition of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R Tolkien" as advertised. The story is an outstanding, imaginary, epic adventure. Unfortunately, Walley is not a writer of the caliber of either Lewis or Tolkien--not many are. That is quite a reputation to be compared against.

I really appreciated the story line that Walley has created. What Christian has pondered a world eleven millenia into the future? A world essentially liberated from the daily affliction of sin, where Christ reigns supreme in a world where sin is ancient history, and the dominion of the entire universe is under the Kingship of Christ through the agency of man? This is great stuff and Walley is to be credited with creating a unique and compelling world.

The story begins very slowly at first (in the first few pages), but it quickly picks up the pace as Merral begins to see changes in the world around him. Very rarely am I so captivated by a book that find it difficult to put down--this is one of those books. I read it every chance I got in great eagerness to see what came next. The adventure rarely lets up.

But, as I alluded to in the beginning, Walley's writing is not quite up to the challenge of the story he's created. The dialog in many places is clunky, unnatural, and reminiscent of the writing one would expect in a video game. It isn't just the dialog either. There are many portions of the book that are very formulaic--and come across like a poorly written TV show. I would have expected the editor to insist upon a great many

changes in the book. Perhaps the next installments are better.

I can only imagine how difficult it is to write of a world where sin is ancient history and inconceivable to a civilization, so perhaps I'm being too critical. Yet it is frustrating to read characters utterly naive to the realities of a world with sin in it. The characters in the book are frustratingly slow to accept the responsibilities they've had hoisted upon them.

There is a critical interaction toward the end of the book that is maddeningly unnatural, unrealistic, and even "unbiblical". I'll not spoil things for those who've not yet read it, but I trust I'm not the only one who was disappointed with this conversation.

Still, the story more than makes up for the deficiencies in the writing and editing. I highly recommend this one. I'm eager to pick up the next in the series.

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### **Davidk says**

Starts out slow, but picks up near the end of part one. The conclusion to part one and part two are masterful, fun, and action packed!

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### **Oskar Järnström says**

A good story and well written but way too religious. Making the story a bit silly at times not to mention very annoying. Feels like this could have become new sci-Fi classic if the religious part had been down played just a little bit.

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### **Kerry and Glenn Jones says**

#### **An epic adventure in a foreign world at the end of the ages!**

This was truly an enjoyable book for myself and my 11 year old son to read together! I am looking forward to finishing the series. This post millennial tale - of the conquest of the Gospel of Jesus and how Satan is unleashed after the millennial reign is completed - is fascinating to think about and utterly enjoy to read. You don't have to agree with the Biblical Eschatology of the author... this series is just good fantasy sci-fi from a Christian worldview. I hope more people get the opportunity to read this with their kids. It is a good series!

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### **Cassidy says**

An epic read! I love LOR and this is a little similar but also very much its own story. I think the first book is my favorite out of the series. I'm very much impressed with how Chris Walley built this world that is very believable. I'm surprised not more people know about this book. It reminded me a little of Ted Dekker's Black series because in both worlds you see the presence of evil return and the reader sees the effects in both worlds.

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### **Debra Slonek says**

This story takes place thousands of years into the future when humans are no longer restricted to living solely on Earth. Through advances in science and technology, other far-flung planets have been terraformed and have become man-made worlds. For many, many years these worlds and populations have lived peacefully and without the influence of sin. As a result, these people are naive, trusting and not the least bit suspicious of anything. As evil slowly creeps back into one of the man-made worlds, unwelcomed changes begin occurring. These changes grow into a huge battle between good and evil forces. Very descriptive writing which kept my interest throughout the whole book. Well done. I really enjoyed this book!

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### **Everley Sharp, the Clankinist says**

Meh. This book was alright, but honestly, it was kind of too...Christian for me. I am Catholic, and I believe in God and Jesus and everything, but there's a point where I don't like reading about them in a fantasy epic. Symbolism about them is cool, but having everyone love and adore and respect them is odd, and a little nearsighted. The different cultures that we have on this earth are special and unique, and I do not believe that making everyone on the planet (and all the other planets the assembly created in this book) Christian would be smart. It would be nice if you didn't argue over religion and people didn't kill each other over it, but the diversity is something we need, and I just didn't like the over thorough Christian aspect here.

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### **Sunny says**

The best part of this book is the ending. This book starts extremely slowly and meanders about in a tale that doesn't make you completely lose interest but I found myself thinking "Get on with it!" It was pretty predictable and I did notice some plot holes. Not sure if these holes were left due to this being a trilogy and will be resolved in later books or if the author ran out of ideas. The main character was quite annoying and his inability to think outside the box was disquieting. The author seems to think a utopian society would inhibit free thought because apparently free thinking leads to evil.

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### **Sarah says**

This wasn't a terrible book, but it was forgettable (there's a reason my review is months late). It certainly brought a different point of view to the table - instead of the characters being naive and helpless, they're strong and capable of a lot. They simply have formed their own worldview after centuries of living in peace and tranquility. There wasn't much a of a hook to this series, and nothing to keep me really on the edge of my seat; I mostly just wanted to see whether or not the characters would encounter evil. The characters are fairly well fleshed out, and the second book looks interesting.

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