



## Shadowline Drift

*Alexes Razevich*

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*Alternate cover edition for ASIN B00JEP2GBI*

2015 Reader's Choice Award Nominee

An Amazonian tribe that may or may not exist; a dangerous teenage sorceress; a beautiful anthropologist - and madness - conspire to stop Jake Kendricks from revealing the truth about a mysterious substance that will end world hunger.

Perfect for lovers of psychological thrillers in the vein of Lost and Inception.

## Shadowline Drift Details

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Author : Alexes Razevich

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# From Reader Review Shadowline Drift for online ebook

## Ronald Keeler says

In *Shadowline Drift* by Alexis Razeovich, we meet Jake, a hero with a humanitarian bent who works for World United, an organization dedicated to solving global humanitarian concerns. What could be more important than solving the problem of world hunger? Jake has found a group of indigenous people in the Amazon forests who possess a secret. Use the concoction they have found and there will be no more hungry people in the world. But there are consequences; not all solutions are happy ones for all participants. This novel, a masterful combination of fantasy, illusion, and (possible) reality will entertain readers and provoke thoughts of a huge moral dilemma.

This novel was a 13 January 2017 Book Of The Day section by OnlineBookClub.org. The 210-page novel is available to read for “free” through Kindle Unlimited (KU). Published in April 2014, this book has appeal for readers of all ages who are interested in fantasy, technology, magic, and humanitarian concerns such as world hunger. It was a surprisingly quick read for me; I read it in one sitting. There is an extensive description of surviving in a hostile natural environment (the Amazon jungle) where survival on any terms is the goal. Readers with military experience in jungle operations will identify with protagonist Jake Kendrick.

Jake is trying to strike a deal with the Tabna tribe, a recently discovered tribe in the Amazon jungle. The spokesman for the tribe is Mawgis, a person who seems to know everything about Jake before Jake informs him. For convenience, let's call Mawgis a medicine man. Mawgis has the secret of Benesha, a compound that with processing in the correct way might solve world hunger. But there are problems with Benesha. It has been successfully tested on animals but not humans. Jake sees a problem with the side effects of Banesha ingestion by humans and wants to warn World United of the problem. Mawgis sees no problem, wants to promote immediate distribution of the wonder compound and knows that he must isolate Jake and prevent Jake's communication with World United.

Mawgis initially seems to be a helper of Jake but Mawgis is a fan of, and user of, deception. All claims and observations of Mawgis have to be filtered by Jake as to their actual meaning. Jake is aided in this by a technological translator, an ear piece worn by Jake and whoever he is communicating with. But accurate translations are difficult, some renderings are a complete puzzle. Users of Google Translate, for example, will empathize. Mawgis determines that the best way to stall Jake in his communication attempts with the home organization, World United, is to abandon Jake in the Amazon jungle. Mawgis leads Jake into the jungle, provides him with a minimum of survival equipment, and disappears.

The journey of Jake consumes approximately four chapters. We learn about the dangers of insects, reptiles, fish, wild boars and the humid climate that is the Amazon. The reader observes Jake's attempts at spear fishing (with only home-made equipment), finding suitable fruits and vegetables to eat and, finally, a rescue by a group of female only inhabitants of a small village

Luckily, the females include one English speaking female anthropologist. Unluckily, everyone except her hates foreigners who, it seems by default, are possessed by demons. Anthropologist Pilar Ramirez has sympathy for Jake but she also has respect for the village shaman Naheyo. Along with her assistant healers, Naheyo considers it her duty to drive the demon out of Jake. He will not be permitted to leave the village and endanger others while still possessed. Naheyo is the judge of when Jake may be permitted to leave. Pilar, while sympathetic to Jake, will always defer to Naheyo. Jake needs to leave the village as soon as possible to warn World United of the dangers of Banesha. Before doing so, he must recover from the debilitating

physical effects of his jungle trek.

Razevich develops the character of Jake well. Readers get a lot of insights into Jake as we watch him survive abandonment in the jungle. Before, after, and throughout his physical ordeal, Jake reflects on his earlier life as a person whose height never approached four feet tall. This, of course, affected his sense of self and ability to socially interact with strangers, friend, and colleagues. In an early discussion with Mawgis, he accepts the blame for this stunted growth. Mawgis promises Jake that this will change. And it does. During his recovery in the village with Pilar, Jake grows to over five feet tall, a reinforcement of the magic running throughout the story. Or maybe the growth was an illusion.

Jake will eventually “escape” from the village. First, he is aided by Knonee, someone from a neighboring village who paddles a canoe in which Jake rides until they reach a settlement where there is a satellite phone so Jake can reach his World United boss. But there is a problem with the phone and Jake wakes up to find he is still in the Lalunta camp with Naheyo. Then, aided by Pilar and a one-eyed parrot, Jake leaves Lalunta again. There is a romantic encounter with Pilar. Things are going well until he wakes up again, still in Lalunta. Now the question becomes, which is the reality and which is the dream?

Mawgis may have the answer. The problem is knowing when a Mawgis truth is reality and when it is an illusion. Jake discovers that he is in a position of power, Mawgis needs his help. In return for a solution to dangers of Benesha, Jake is willing to help Mawgis but how can Jake be sure he is getting an actual and true solution? Will this just be another illusion offered by Mawgis before Mawgis disappears forever from Jake's life?

There are surprises right up to the last chapter in this entertaining fantasy novel. Good for all ages, devoid of graphic (or any) sex, violence, and bad language, this is simply a good read.

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## **Sarah-Jayne Briggs says**

(I received a free copy of this book in exchange for a review).

(This review may contain spoilers).

I was a bit surprised by how easy I found this book to read. I was drawn really quickly into the storyline and I was able to empathise with Jake really well.

The action started in this book almost straight away, with very little build-up. Although I would have liked a bit more background, especially with the interactions Jake had with the other characters he knew, I was able to follow what was going on really well. I did feel some sympathy for Jake... especially when finding out exactly why he was so small.

It was interesting to have the opportunity to see more of the Amazonian forest that Jake was in, though I did feel that there was a bit of telling rather than showing. I did think it was good to see something of Jake's resourcefulness while he's in the forest... and there's a good bit of foreshadowing during the course of the book, too.

I found Pilar an interesting character, but I didn't feel as if I got to know her very well as a love interest for Jake. Parts of the book, where Jake was in the compound, didn't exactly feel real. Though it was good to see some of the culture of the tribe Pilar was studying, there were parts during that time that came across as almost dream-like.

I would have liked a bit more background on Jake, such as his relationship with his parents now and friends and work colleagues. I could certainly understand what drew him to visit the tribe at the start of the book and it was interesting to see him interacting with the members of the Tabna tribe and trying to learn about them.

I thought that the supernatural elements in this book added an interesting dimension, though the book did become more fantastical as the storyline went on. I felt that most of the characters were intriguing and I would have liked to know more about most of them.

It would be good to read a sequel to this book and see where Jake will go next... and if he's truly out of danger now.

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## **Stanley Marshall says**

### **Pretty good book**

Not sure if I would classify this as straight fantasy or fiction/fantasy but either way I liked it and had a hard time putting it down.

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## **Awesome Indies Reviewers says**

'Shadowline Drift' by Alexes Razevich is an unusual story with compelling metaphysics and rich, beautifully written descriptions.

It's the story of Jake, a man only three and a half feet tall, who has been sent to the Amazon to negotiate with the chief of a lost tribe for access to a mineral that could end world hunger—or so he thinks. What he finds is a world vastly different to the one he knows and a chief who is much more than he seems at first glance. The chief seems at first a trickster, then a magician, then perhaps a demon and finally an accidental traveller between universes. Jake comes to wonder what is real and what isn't and questions his sanity many times before the story concludes.

After gaining access to the mineral, he discovers that it isn't the God-send he thought it would be. Although not poisonous to animals, it is to humans. All those starving people will die unless Jake can warn those planning to distribute meat from animals fed on the stuff. Trouble is, everything seems to be conspiring against his bid to escape the forest and find a working telephone.

Razevich has done a fine job in creating a believable character and a world so clearly described that I can feel, hear and smell it as well as see it in my mind's eye. Apart from the small size of the protagonist, the book starts off fairly ordinary, and I was not very taken with it in the first few pages. Once the chief takes Jake on a journey, however, the unique aspects of this book begin to appear and from that point on, Razevich gradually ramps up the tension until the climax where Jake struggles with the Shadowline—you have to read it to find out what that is.

I did wonder what about the Chief's village. How did they get there? And what is their future without their chief? Perhaps they were an illusion? I would like to have had that tied up.

The book isn't very long, perhaps a two-nighter, and it's well worth a read, especially for those interested in metaphysics. I would like to read more from this author.

4 stars.

I received this book free of charge from the author in return for an honest review.

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### **Donna Cummins says**

If you have never traveled to the Amazon jungle, Shadowline Drift will take you there on this magical, metaphysical journey between illusion and reality. This author's strong command of the English language and adept ability at vivid descriptive narrative will sweep you away to the dark and mysterious rainforest; will bring it alive in sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste; will transport you into this mystical place where truth and fantasy dance together in elusive rhythm.

The plot of the story revolves around an American negotiator of dwarfed stature, working for World United, who travels to the rainforest to meet Mawgis, leader of a local tribe, who apparently holds the secret to a mineral that can stave off world hunger. In his quest, the American soon learns that this much sought-after panacea called benesha will, in actuality, cause the death of hundreds of thousands of people should it be used.

This well-edited plot flows easily and intriguingly enough to keep the reader's curiosity aroused. The dialogue is realistic. Although the characters are interesting and adequately-developed, each effectively fulfilling his or her role in moving the story along, it is the author's innate style of writing which impressed me most through her broad vocabulary, electrifying description, and the use of creative metaphors and clever similes like "branches like ballerina skirts," "frustration like broken glass," and "wings like splinters of mirror."

The fantasy genre is not my usual 'cup of tea.' However, Shadowline Drift touches with feathery stroke upon the genres of mystery, romance, and adventure as well and therefore, in my opinion, opens its interest and reading appeal to a very broad audience. I would highly recommend Ms. Razevich's work.

A copy of this book was provided to me in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Jay Howard says**

This story starts extremely well, landing the reader straight into the depths of the rainforest. I could feel that humidity, the heat, the difficulties of dealing with abundant life that is often poisonous or venomous. Needless to say the characterisation is very well done too, giving me a very clear mental picture of the players in the negotiations for benesha.

The first time I read this book my initial impression was that there was too much emphasis on Jake's diminutive size, and there were some questions niggling at the back of my mind. I was sure, with writing of this quality, this was probably due to my rushed plunge through it, rather than a lack in the story itself; I delayed reviewing it until I'd had time to read it again, more slowly and with fewer distractions. The second

reading allowed me to absorb from this beautifully tight writing the important details of the story - and their implications.

One of my concerns was about a perceived inconsistency about Jake's stature: if his mind was strong enough at 5 years old to halt his growth, why was it not strong enough to reverse that halt when he grew older and so obviously desired to be of normal height? Then I read Jake had 'a vain pride that he'd achieved as much as he had in life, despite his size' and it suddenly clicked; as a child the problem had gained him lots of attention from his parents, and as an adult he was still marked out as someone different, someone who was noticed. It is Jake's size that drives the story forward. It is his subconscious doubt about himself and his worth that makes him vulnerable to Mawgis' influence in a world in which there is difficulty telling reality from 'magic', truth from delusion, hallucinations from machinations.

Jake was confused and unsure what was happening; I was too. I always felt off-kilter, never sure of the time or place, who was friend and who was foe. How were these things being done to Jake, or was he going insane? Right up to the end I didn't know how it would all be resolved. Brilliant!

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## **Marin says**

This author is worth reading.

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## **Wesley says**

Shadow Line Drift by Alexes Razeovich is SciFi/Quantum Fiction novel. This is one of my favorite SciFi sub-genres. Most Quantum Fiction novels are dealing with time/space, like in The Time Keeper, but alternate dimensions are so much funner. A lot of people confuse this with Fantasy because there is usually some sort of fantastical aspect to these types of novels, but the difference lies in the fact that the world is still based in reality; that's what makes this genre so fun - it's just a couple degrees off reality, and still lies within the realm of scientific possibility. The problem most authors have is that they take far too many liberties, and turn SciFi into fantasy. Mrs. Razeovich has a perfect balance. As a result, Shadow Line Drift was a pleasure to read.

I spent a couple of years in Brazil, so it was fun to have the Brazilian culture mixed in to this novel. I spent my time in Sao Paulo, the third largest city in the world, so it was nothing like the Amazon (where the story took place), but I had a lot of interactions with people from the Amazon, and especially Manaus, so I've heard the stories. This all just added another level of enjoyment to the novel. I haven't asked the author, nor is it in her profile, but I would swear she'd spent some time down there. Either that, or she really did her research. A lot of authors underestimate the importance of these consistencies, but it adds a level of depth which draws the reader in all the more. I loved it.

Okay, on to the synopsis.

Jake, our protagonist, is a representative of World United sent to a tiny tribe in the Amazon to negotiate a trade agreement for a newly-found protein supplement, benesha, which would practically end world hunger. When animals eat benesha their protein content goes through the roof. Scientist tested the supplements on

rats, and then fed the rats to dogs. The dogs weren't hungry again for a week. It's a miracle supplement. Jake is called in because he is an excellent negotiator, but probably more importantly, he's a little person. The tribe he goes to see is made up of mostly little people not more than 4 feet tall.

Mawgis, the tribal leader, is a strange fellow. The tribe has a habit of testing the wits of outsiders in a never-ending game of one upmanship. Jake feels that the whole negotiation is a test of his wits, and the test continues throughout the novel. In the end, Jake's size does have a lot to do with the success of the negotiation. Mawgis wants to know Jake's story. The tribal leader has a sixth sense, seems to know Jake's thoughts, and knows that Jake's diminutive size has nothing to do with genetics. The old tribal leader is right. Jake never wanted to grow up for fear of losing his mother's love, so he wished with all his might to stay small... his wish came true. Doctor's couldn't explain it. Jake couldn't even explain it, but it happened.

I just loved Mrs. Razevich attention to detail with Jake's size. I deal with a disability. It isn't as easily seen like Jake's size, but it is omnipresent in my life. Most people with any disability will tell you, in their honest moments, that it is always an issue in life. They can learn to deal with it, and rise above it, but it is always present in their lives and affects almost everything they do. I just reamed an author over this issue. His protagonist had a bum leg, and the injury was very inconsistent throughout the novel. It ruined the story for me. Mrs. Razevich was incredibly sensitive of the issue. Dwarfism is considered a disability simply because it severely limits the persons ability to carry out what most people would consider normal tasks. Jake is often focused on his height/size, even though he doesn't let the outside world know. The inner dialog is so realistic. It was one of the most honest portrayals of inner turmoil I've read about the insecurities a person feels over their limitations. The effect this stigma had on the way Jake interacts with the world (and later in the book when another wish is granted) made the character real.

At any rate, Mawgis has his own terrible agenda. Mawgis abandons Jake in the rain forest after telling him his horrible plans. Jake, alone, lost, and scared has to find his way out of the forest, and to a phone, to alert the World United organization of the danger disguised as a miracle.

Just as Jake thinks he's made it out, he finds he's trapped in another one of Mawgis's webs.

This story was so great. I found myself dreaming about it in between reads. That happens so seldom for me. I love a good book, but an author who can create a real character, a fascinating plot, and a smooth read is an even more precious and rare gem. I look forward to reading more of Mrs. Razevich's work.

I openly recommend this book to any reader. There's a little language, so young audiences beware, but other than that, it was awesome.

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### **Aria von Dimple says**

"I'm a scientist. I'm supposed to be non-judgmental about cultural differences."

"You're human," he said. "So you have an opinion anyway."

Singing voices wove through the small silence. Pilar smoothed her hair away from her face and sighed.

"There are spirits here," she said. "And the magic is real."

I received a free copy of this book from Shut Up & Read group for an honest review.

Oh boy it was an exciting read. Throughout the book, I had a whole symphony of "Holy shit" moments making me positively amazed. Before I started reading, I had hopes that it'll be a mild entertainment but it was so much more.

Miss Razevich can write. Back in the days I may have taken it for granted but recent years and more specifically one recent novel called "Melanie's Evanescent Journey" have made me appreciate the simple pleasure of reading coherent and well thought-through sentences. I shall never take good writing for granted again. Also, I don't consider myself a particularly picky reader and it's quite easy to please me to some extent (fluid and admirable writing, relevant story line with a novel twist, magnificent plot and some witty humor) but the more I read the more I discard books for being "like so many others before it", "juvenile" or simply "boring". So starting to read a new book, especially the one I haven't heard anything about (like with "Shadowline Drift"), I don't tend to get my hopes up. Probably because of my lack of expectations, I found this book to be a great entertainer with just the right amount of mindfuck. I often find mysteries to exhausting to read because they try too hard and a) I feel like a polar bear lost in the forest of endless questions, stomping all around or b) I get bored because I've figured out the "mystery" *pages* ago. But in this book, there was just the right amount of edge to this story that made me want to read it more. Yes, I had questions but they didn't add up to the amount that it would've bothered me. The story wasn't as complex as "Lost" (as advertising may suggest) but considering how short this book is I would say that it did quite well. I get the feeling that some questions were meant to be left unanswered (view spoiler).

I like a good character building as much as anyone. Every character in the book is believable because they are so flawed and downright weird even, making them more relevant somehow. The mysterious Tabna tribe was all sorts of odd habits. Naheyo is as crazy as hell, like a proper Amazonian shaman has to be (imo) and even Pilar is a small oddity. Jake is presented as the ultimate good-doer who has been caught up in the storm of events that he has no control over. Because we see the world through his eyes he's an easy character to sympathize with and when all goes down, we are as confused as he is. At one point, I wouldn't have been surprised if Jake just hallucinated the whole story while sitting in the same hut that Magwis and he first went to get all high and mighty from benesha.

In "Shadowline Drift" (as in many books before it) there are two quite separate but colliding worlds, scientific one that we are used to and so-called magical one that had no real borders and is hard to define. Because I'm a little scientist myself I also found myself trying to reason out some of the magical elements of the book. I tried to find an explanation in Magwis' powers blaming drugs or dreams rather than believing that (view spoiler). It seemed to me that both the book and I were trying to be all "whoa-whoa, let's be reasonable now, person can't just stop their growth" while the story tries to prove us wrong. And in some ways, it does because I can't come up with anything better. I have no other choice then to believe that some things just can't be explained (yet). And maybe, just maybe this is one of the main purposes of this book.

After I had finished the book, I started wondering why Magwis didn't just ask Jake to help him (view spoiler). Yes, Jake would probably have thought that Magwis is completely nuts but if Magwis was so desperate to get back why waste all this time? He's fondness of theatrics also made him vulnerable – you can't control every aspect of the game and the longer the game lasts the more it can turn against you. Before you know it your pawn has outsmarted you. The simplest way is usually the most effective. Just ask Jake, just communicate. If he says no then you can start with the purgatory.

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## **Gloria Piper says**

In the Amazon strange things happen.

The jungle captures us, maintaining a deep hold so we can see, hear, touch, taste, and smell it. And it won't let us go until it is ready.

Jake is a little guy, the size of a normal five-year-old. He works for an organization dedicated to ending world hunger. Chosen partly for his diminutive size, the same size as the adults of a newly discovered Amazon tribe, Jake is sent to negotiate with its leader, Mawgis, over the acquisition of a mineral capable of rescuing millions from starvation. Only this one tribe can provide it. Or so it seems.

The adventure takes an eery turn. Jake soon wonders if Mawgis is really human or a demon whose product could bring death instead of salvation. Intent on stopping the acquisition, Jake finds himself stuck in the jungle, caught between reality and illusion. Can he undo the harm before it's too late?

Exquisitely written with surprising twists, here is a must-read fantasy, science fiction original that won't disappoint.

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## **Jo Auburne says**

This is an unusual read, especially with the strange plot. It's a well written book with lively characters. I enjoyed the read.

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## **Gloria Ng says**

The title alone was intriguing enough to lure me into opening the book in the first place. Although definitely not my typical read, I loved how the first paragraph already brought me into the depths of the rainforest by sight, sound, taste, touch, feel.

Not only that, the introduction of characters and paranormal life in the forest were gradually introduced without me feeling inundated with terminologies and other metaphysical aspects of the world the author created.

Jake Kendrick, the size of a five-year-old, works for an organization that is intent on ending world hunger. Because he is the same size as Mawgis, the chief of a newly discovered tribe in the Amazon rainforest, Jake is sent to negotiate on behalf of humankind to secure a certain mineral that only the tribe has on its grounds. This mineral supposedly has the potential to make world hunger a thing of the past.

As Jake's mission continues, Mawgis and the mineral become increasingly suspect. Whose side is Mawgis really on? Does the mineral really have the power to cure people of starvation? Because of the twists and turns as the plot thickens. I suggest that you go through this novel when you have a certain degree of leisure time to catch significant details that will allow you to figure out what is really going on.

Shadowline Drift is definitely an intriguing sci-fi thriller that will whet your appetite for more.

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## **Gisela Hausmann says**

This story could be simple, but it isn't. Like 'Dune' it points at important questions; the book is such a riveting read that at least this reader could not put it down.

Jake Kendrick, a devoted, brilliant negotiator for 'World United' travels to the Amazon. He wants to meet Mawgis, the leader of the small Tabna tribe, who knows about benesha. Fed to animals the mineral benesha's protein-enhancing properties cause animals to grow faster and bigger. Subsequently these animals could be fed to people; 'World United' wants to end world hunger. The mission is complicated, dangerous, and Jack feels the pressure - too many lives depend on his skills. He engages in dangerous activities, takes mind enhancing drugs and does what he feels he must to save the many, just because he thinks he can. "... He [Jack] was a fool, and this was his job - to stick with Magwis until negotiations were completed or had broken beyond repair..."

In a different book, in a different genre, this could have been a good action story with a super-human character defying the odds, negotiating the contract, getting the benesha, finding a beautiful Indian girlfriend and saving the world.

"Shadowline Drift: A Metaphysical Thriller" is a lot more, and a lot more riveting.

Jack is not a typical superhero, he is only three and a half feet tall. Soon Magwis lures out of him, why he is that short. As a child, Jake had been afraid of growing; he feared that if he grew he would not be loved anymore like the child who could be cuddled on his mother's lap. He himself had wished to never grow bigger. However willing and desiring Jack cannot undo his action and wish himself grow taller. Though skillful and extremely intelligent, Jack has really been selected for this mission because he is as short as the Tabnas.

Indeed Jack will need all his strength because nothing is as it seems. Magwis explains to him that humans, who eat animals fed on benesha, will die. Because benesha is really a 'mental and time' travel facilitator Magwis can even show Jack what will happen - people will die by the thousands. And - Magwis wants the world to have benesha so "... the hungry will eat benesha meat and they will die, as they should, and the earth will come back into balance. The world will be better for it."

Knowing that Jack will "...fight to the end for what [he] believes is right..." Magwis sends him on a journey through the jungle. In the process Jack will find himself and possibly grow back to the 'tall man, he was supposed to be'. He will also find a lovely young woman, who will fight with him. Lastly he will have to help Magwis to get back over the shadowline.

In the meantime, Jack's team members, thinking that Jack died in the jungle, are shipping benesha to 'World United'.

This extraordinary story reminded me of the novel "Dune". There are the big questions, which inevitably will come in the future. Whether it is about water or food, in coming times shortages will threaten the world's overpopulation. To conquer these problems the ones, who want to do the job, will need to know

themselves first, learn to learn, adapt, and - grow.

Alexes Razevich does a wonderful job in describing the feelings of humans when facing danger, tragedy and fear.

“... Night stole his courage...”

“... Old memories began to churn...”

“... He had killed for nothing...”

“...Emotionally? Now ‘there’ was a question. But he knew the answer...”

I never post spoilers but I hereby express my hope that Alexes Razevich will write a sequel to 'Shadowline', and tell us whether Jack, Ashne, and Pilar will be able to use benesha for the benefit of mankind, and learn to use it as a travel facilitator. I sense Alexes could come up with amazing metaphysical adventures.

5 stars for this riveting novel.

Gisela Hausmann, author & blogger

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## **Chip says**

Wow. I read Khe by this same author and greatly enjoyed it last year, but was hesitant to read this one. You see, I loved the skill that the author exhibited in world building in that book. I also enjoyed the concept of the book (the description reminded me of Elantris which I loved). Plus, I know that the author is a genuinely nice and interesting person.

So, why did I hold off on reading this book? It really wasn't anything major. I just knew how much I enjoyed the author's first book and didn't want to ruin my impression - plus. To be honest, I didn't think anyone could pull off an interesting book about minerals in a rain forest. Plus, I tend to read a lot of sci-fi/fantasy and dystopian future books so this one didn't seem to be up my alley.

I was wrong. Very wrong. I can certainly tell you that Alexes Razevich is not a one hit wonder. I was quickly and effortlessly drawn into the narrative of this story. I'm not sure how she does it, but I quickly grew interested in the main character (and even the supporting characters). The writing was crisp and clean - I read a good number of new authors and you can usually tell that they are new authors. Alexes is not like this.

What else can I say? The story is paced well. As a reader, I sometimes get into the habit of just skimming sections of books to get to the action. I didn't even consider it with this book. Nor did I spend time wishing that parts of the books were fleshed out more thoroughly.

Read this book. Read Khe. Follow this author so you won't miss any future books that this author puts out.

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## **Pete says**

Jake Kendrick is a brilliant negotiator, even though—or maybe because—he's only three and a half feet tall. When a substance is discovered which holds the promise to end world hunger, Jake seems the perfect person

to secure the rights from the diminutive Amazonian chief who claims to hold the only supply.

This is the most unusual novel I have read this year (and I read a lot). A story within which anything is possible and little is as it seems. The author kept me unbalanced and on edge throughout, and I enjoyed the ride.

A minimalistic plot gives the main character an overriding purpose to keep moving forward through seemingly insurmountable odds, and this frees the author to delve into a world of the real and the imaginary. For me, the reading pleasure came through the fascinating metaphysical backdrop that draped every character and event—eerily believable and richly detailed. Try this for a descriptive sentence: “Purple orchids burst through the fat green leaves like tethered birds aching to take flight,” or this for mood setting: “Drizzle fell, as soft as kisses on his skin.” There are plenty more.

A few loose ends remained untied at the conclusion, but I didn’t feel cheated. This story was about the journey not the plot. A bit like an acid trip, there’s little to be gained by me explaining what went on, you have to experience it for yourself. I’d strongly recommend reading the Amazon sample. If you enjoy how the story starts, I don’t think you’ll regret reading through to the end.

Disclaimer: This review was originally written for "Books and Pals" book blog. I may have received a free review copy.

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