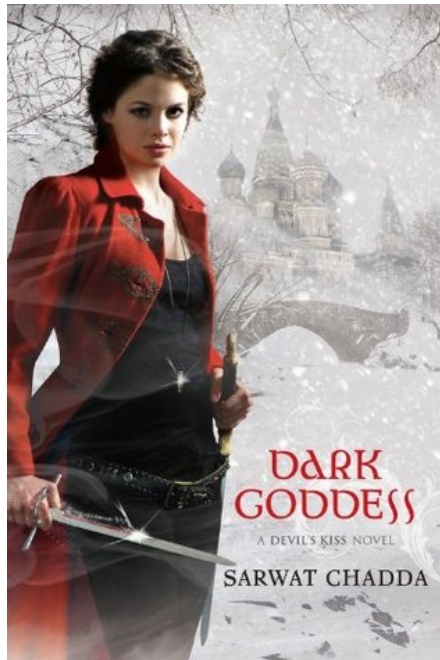




Dark Goddess

Sarwat Chadda

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Dark Goddess Sarwat Chadda

Still reeling from the death of her best friend, Kay, Billi's thrust back into action when the Templars are called to investigate werewolf activity. But these werewolves are like nothing Bilil's ever seen.

They call themselves the *Polenitsy*: man killers. The ancient warrior women of Eastern Europe, supposedly wiped out centuries ago. But now they've come out of hiding and are on the hunt for a Spring Child - an Oracle powerful enough to blow the volcano at Yellowstone - and start a Fimbulwinter that will wipe out humankind for good.

The Templars follow the stolen Spring Child to Russia, and the only people there who can fight the supernatural are the Bogatyrs, longtime enemies of the Templars. To reclaim the Spring Child and save the world, Billi needs to earn the trust of Ivan Romanov, a young Russian soldier whose suspicious of people in general, and of Billi in particular.

Dark Goddess is a page-turning, action-packed sequel that spans continents, from England to the Russian underworld and back. This is an adventure of folklore and myth become darkly real. Of the world running out of time. And of Billi SanGreal, the only one who can save it.

Dark Goddess Details

Date : Published January 25th 2011 by Hyperion Book (first published 2010)

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Author : Sarwat Chadda

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From Reader Review Dark Goddess for online ebook

The Readings of a Busy Mom Riaz says

www.thereadingsofabusymom.blogspot.com

OK so first of i need to say WOW!!! this book totally blew me away. Sarwat Chadda has hit the top of my favourite authors list with his sequel to The Devils Kiss and I'm stoked to have had the pleasure of reading this. The Dark Goddess is a well written, fast paced book that has continuous action flowing from one page to another keeping you engaged from the beginning to the very end.

Sarwat has carefully thought out his characters and the roles they play and why they play them in the Dark Goddess. Billi is strong and entrancing character, her constant battles keep you enthralled and sympathising with her until she found her happy end. Vasalisa was a child brought up in a world aware of her surroundings but not too aware she would be scared. she was wise and observant for her age and i automatically warmed to her and her nature. Irvin coped well and i loved how he softened to Billi, from the moment Irvin and Billi's eyes met it was like i was given a sign, they where so alike in so many ways it was impossible for the two characters to not meet again and when they did i was ecstatic. They where my favourite characters in the Dark Goddess.

I highly recommend getting yourself a copy of this book, you wont be disappointed....i truly can not wait to see what Sarwat has in store for us next.

Stephen says

I enjoy Chadda's revision of the Templars and how he mixes Arthurian legend with them. However, Billi seems to be a little to whiney for me. I made it through this one because it was on my to read list. The use of the Baba Yaga was fascinating. What keeps me in Chadda's stories is the world and the way he uses mythos.

Angela says

2.5 stars

In DARK GODDESS, author Sarwat Chadda returns to the world of the Knights Templar and their youngest and only female member, Billi SanGreal. After the harrowing showdown between good and evil in THE DEVIL'S KISS, Billi is trying to recover, but reports of werewolf activity thrust her and the other knights back into action. The werewolf hunt takes them to Russia, where an ancient power is searching for a Spring Child to bring about the demise of humankind. In Russia, Billi meets the Bogatyrs and the arrogant but attractive Ivan Romanov. In a race against time, the two must learn to trust each other in an effort to save the world.

Even more than Chadda's first book, DARK GODDESS is packed with action and gritty scenes that don't flinch at violence. This installment mixes together real Russian history, folklore, and legend to create an imaginative conflict. The mythology also expands to include demon hunters similar to the Templars, which

made the existence of the Templars themselves more believable, and the references to Arthurian legend become more pronounced. While I wasn't impressed with the character development overall, this book includes a slightly better relationship between Billi and her father, and it touches on the emotional aftermath of Kay's death. The book also wraps with a conclusive ending that has a finished feel.

Despite these potential strengths, the book didn't come together to me. Even though there was constant action, character development suffered for it. None of the characters showed much change or growth, and the storylines regarding Kay's death and Billi's relationship with Ivan were presented in ways that felt inconsistent with Billi's character. The main plotline also felt slightly repetitive, because it dealt with another type of Oracle that immediately became associated with the Templars. Even with her training, Billi again comes off as less competent and weaker than expected. The villains also sometimes seemed ineffectual, and the battle scene descriptions often felt choppy or disjointed.

For those who love an action-filled book with folklore and fighting, this book will be a perfect fit. For me, however, I couldn't enjoy it because I didn't observe any authentic development in the characters. In future books, I hope Chadda continues to bring his gritty edge to the action, while also incorporating greater character development and a more believable romance.

Note: This review refers to an advance reader's copy.

Kathy (Kindle-aholic) says

Violence and theme-wise, this is the most adult UF-like YA series I've come across. There is no sex, and very little cursing. It is gritty, though, and I think shows a lot more of what the reality of fighting for your life day in and day out would do to you.

Billi SanGreal is a knight, one of the Templars who fight for humanity against vampires, werewolves, demons, the occasional fallen angel and gods. There are religious overtones - the Templars are fighting for God, and vampires sell their souls to the devil for immortality, but it's not preachy. There is no time for preaching. This war isn't without sacrifices, too, something Billi knows very well.

There is so much tension in this series for me, especially after events in book 1. I didn't feel like anyone was safe at any time.

At the same time, it wasn't as though everything was hopeless. It's dark, yes, but I was still cheering Billi on. The book flowed really well, and while I might have liked to get to know some of the side characters better, I'm glad that there are threads left for future books. Will be looking for more from Chadda.

Katieb (MundieMoms) says

Dark Goddess is a fantastic, action packed sequel that completely blew me away. Be prepared to fasten your seatbelt when you sit down to read this book, as Sarwat's talent for story telling will introduce you to more fantastic characters, as he unravels his richly detailed story, full of history and folklore. This time Billi and the Knights Templar leave London behind for the city and woods of Russia to protect Vasalisa, a Spring

Child that the witch Baba Yaga wants.

Billi is a character who continues to amaze me. The heartache she dwelt with at the end of Devil's Kiss hardens her up a bit in Dark Goddess, which I completely sympathized with. Not wanting to fall victim to a broken heart again and feeling responsible for the lives lost in war with Michael, Billi loses herself to the cause of the Knights Templar. That's until she meets her match with Ivan (Tsarevich Ivan Alexeivich Romanov), who has a lot in common with her and is a character I loved getting to know. Together, Billi and Ivan help each other in ways no one else is able to and I loved their scenes together. Their chemistry is an added bonus to this story.

This is such an intriguing story, as Sarwat merges together the Knights Templar with the Russian lore, mixing together the history of Tsar Alexei's family with that of Baba Yaga, throwing in paranormal characters set in modern day. The scenes are so vivid that at times I felt like I was watching a movie. There is some amazing action scenes between the Knights Templar, the werewolves (who have a rich history all their own tied to Baba Yaga), and the Bogatyrs.

If you're looking for a book that has it all, then Dark Goddess is a book you need to pick up! All I can really say is WOW! I was completely blown away with this fast paced, sequel to Devil's Kiss. Dark Goddess has a riveting, twisted plot that makes me want to go re-read it again. There are some scenes who's action/gore may be a little too much for sensitive readers.

Dion Yulianto says

Pengabungan antara fiksi-fantasi dengan tema-tema kontroversi dalam historika dunia, itulah yang mungkin hendak disampaikan oleh Sarwat Chadda dalam Dark Goddess. Novel Dark fantasy yang merupakan sekuel dari novel pertamanya, Devil Kiss, ini memungut topik-topik menarik dalam sejarah dan geografis dunia, untuk kemudian dipadukan dengan tren fiksi bertema vampire dan manusia serigala yang saat ini sedang booming pasca meledaknya Twilight dan Vampire Diaries. Dalam novel ini, penulis menggunakan kelompok Ordo kesatria Templar sebagai kelompok pejuang utama. Ordo yang pernah menjadi begitu populer lewat The Da Vinci's Code ini dimunculkan kembali dalam bentuk yang lain, yang lebih fantastis. Jika dalam sejarah, ordo ini dibentuk sebagai pasukan pelindung Yerusalem semasa Perang Salib, maka dalam buku ini mereka dipersiapkan untuk menghadapi perang yang sebenarnya—perang melawan iblis dan kegelapan yang diwakili oleh Makhluk Tidak Kudus (vampire, ghoul, manusia serigala)

Adalah Billi atau Bilqis Sangreal, anak dari ketua Ordo Ksatria Templar yang menjadi inti cerita dalam novel ini. Gadis yang baru berusia 15 tahun ini terpaksa harus menjalani berbagai latihan keras dan beragam pertempuran karena tanggung jawabnya sebagai salah satu dari Ksatria Templar. Dalam kisah di buku pertama, Billi dikisahkan melawan Malaikat Michael yang hendak menghancurkan dunia, sementara dalam buku kedua ini, Billi dan Ksatria Templar harus menghadapi seorang dewi Bumi dari Rusia, sang Baba Yaga, sang Ibu Rusia. Dewi purba yang kekuatannya terikat pada elemen alam ini membutuhkan roh seorang Anak Musim Semi, atau anak yang memiliki kekuatan khusus—mungkin mirip dengan anak indingo. Untuk tetap bertahan, Baba Yaga harus menelan seorang Anak Musim Semi, dan Billilah yang kali ini harus melindungi si anak tak berdosa itu dari serbuan para manusia serigala yang merupakan anak buah sang dewi.

Masalah semakin rumit ketika Billi dan Ksatria Templar menemukan fakta bahwa Anak Musim Semi yang mereka lindungi adalah juga seorang Avatar—kekuatannya hampir serupa dengan Baba Yaga. Gadis kecil itu mampu mengendalikan letusan Gunung Vesuvius yang mengubur kota Naples, Italia. Dan, Baba Yaga

hendak menggunakan kekuatan itu untuk kembali meletuskan gunung berapi super Yellowstone untuk menimbulkan zaman es atau fimbulwinter.. Kali ini, pertaruhan adalah seluruh umat manusia yang hendak dimusnahkan oleh Baba Yaga. Dan, ketika akhirnya kawanan manusia serigala itu mampu merebut si anak musim panas, Billi dan para Ksatria Templar harus berkejaran dengan waktu untuk merebut kembali si Anak Musim Semi. Mereka mendatangi Rusia, rumah bagi Baba Yaga sekaligus bertemu dengan ksatria Templar ala Rusia, yakni Bogatyr. Dan, pertempuran dan perkelahian pun tidak bisa dielakkan lagi.

Sepanjang 480 halaman, pembaca akan disugahi perang berdarah, cabikan cakar serigala, sayatan pedang, hingga tembakan pistol. Namun, penulis dengan lihai juga mampu menyisipkan benih-benih romantisme dalam kadar yang tidak terlalu berlebihan. Inilah yang membuat novel aksi ini tidak membosankan untuk dibaca, karena efek aksinya dapat, bumbu-bumbu romannya juga ada—berselang-seling seperti hutan pinus dan hutan cemara di Rusia. Keunikan dari novel ini terletak pada kepiawaian sang penulis dalam meramu unsur mitologi dengan peristiwa-peristiwa dan tempat-tempat nyata dalam sejarah. Kota-kota dan bangunan-bangunan di Rusia pun mampu ia deskripsikan dengan begitu nyata, sehingga membuat pembaca diajak mengunjungi sebuah tempat yang begitu eksotis di luar Eropa dan Amerika.

Menarik juga mengamati bahwa penulis tampaknya hendak mengangkat isu lingkungan melalui Baba Yaga. Gunung Vesuvius, Super Volcano Yellowstone, Hutan Tuguska, Siberia, Bencana Chernobyl, hingga zaman es akbar yang menjadi simpul-simpul penggerak cerita menjadi indikasi bahwa novel ini menawarkan sesuatu yang lebih. Permainan psikologis dengan karakter yang abu-abu di dalamnya juga menjadikan novel ini begitu kompleks, namun tetap simpel. Melalui sang manusia serigala, kita terpaksa meninjau ulang apa peran dan posisi manusia di muka bumi ini.

“Kalian memerkosa dan menjarah. Kalian menyedot Bumi hingga kering dan membunuh sesama kalian. Spesies apa yang menjadi sejahtera di bawah dominasi manusia? Tidak ada satu pun. Bumi ini bukan milik kalian. Kekayaan planet ini seharusnya dinikmati oleh semua, bukan cuma dilahap oleh satu spesies yang mengaku bahwa mereka telah diberi hak oleh Yang Maha Kuasa.” (hlm 364) #jleb!

Walau mengangkat isu lingkungan, novel ini tidak kehilangan gregetnya sebagai novel fantasi. Pertempuran berdarah yang disuguhkan di dalamnya dijamin akan memuaskan para pecinta karya aksi. Pertautan yang digunakan penulis juga cukup logis dan masuk akal, sehingga pembaca digiring pada pemahaman bahwa mungkin saja ada kekuatan-kekuatan misterius yang senantiasa mengintai manusia di balik kegelapan, termasuk dalam hal ini adalah kekuatan Alam. Lalu, bagaimana akhir dari pertempuran Billy melawan para manusia serigala itu? Siapakah pengkhianat yang sebenarnya? Dan, apakah Billi akan jatuh cinta dengan seorang pangeran muda dari Rusia? Pokoknya silakan dibaca sendiri dan rasakan ketegangannya. Satu catatan kecil, catatan di cover belakang mungkin sedikit agak menyesatkan hehehe jadi lebih baik menikmati bab demi bab dalam novel ini dan jangan terpaku pada kalimat “melawan binatang buas dalam diri sendiri” karena Billi akan lebih banyak bertarung melawan serigala jadi-jadian itu secara fisik.

“Alam akan selalu menang” Vasilisa memaki kembali mahkota itu. “Chernobyl adalah buktinya.” (halaman 479). Mari kita jaga Bumi!

Ilaria says

Oggi parliamo dell'avvincente e apocalittico seguito di Devil's Kiss!

La trama inizia dopo pochi mesi dalla fine del precedente libro. Billi ormai ha abbracciato la filosofia di vita del padre, trovandosi così a combattere tutti i demoni senza lasciarsi travolgere dai sentimenti umani.

Quando si trova a salvare la vita alla piccola Vasilisa – nuovo possibile Oracolo – da alcune licanthrope, non poteva immaginare che avrebbe dovuto salvare anche il mondo intero!

Prima che la bambina possa essere mandata al sicuro a Gerusalemme, viene nuovamente rapita. I Templari la raggiungono in Russia, trovandosi a combattere contro una nemica unica, ancora più potente degli angeli, proveniente dalle antiche fiabe russe: Baba Jaga, la Dea Nera, la Signora dell'inverno... che vuole scatenare una nuova Era Glaciale affinché la razza umana si estingua...

Come per il precedente romanzo l'autore ha saputo amalgamare sapientemente le diverse religioni, con leggende, fantasy, apocalissi e realtà. Il risultato è questo strabiliante libro, che consiglio a tutti poiché intenso, emozionante e coinvolgente come pochi.

Scritto con toni violenti e crudi, alternanza di scene macabre e d'azione, non è per niente il classico fantasy per adolescenti!

Sorprendenti colpi di scena (compreso l'inaspettato finale) arricchiscono la trama, con l'entrata in gioco di altri personaggi affascinanti ed enigmatici.

Un romanzo ancora migliore del precedente, in cui Sarwat Chadda trasmette soprattutto un importantissimo messaggio: il mondo sta per morire proprio a causa dell'uomo... e la natura non può fare altro che ribellarsi! Chissà che non possa far riflettere molti lettori?

Brenda cuevas says

To continue with war with the unholy, the setting changes and type of unholy changes so smoothly you almost don't catch it your just there. Much more blood and guts another boyfriend and a strange twist toward the end I didn't expect. I enjoy this book as much as the first.

Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says

Last year, I picked up a book called Devil's Kiss on impulse. It sounded good, with a story about a girl who is the daughter of the leader of the modern day Knight's Templar. I read this book, and I loved it. So, I was definitely going to continue the series. And Sarwat Chadda has continued the excellent writing in this next installment.

First of all, he writes a character that is complex and surprisingly likable and identifiable. Normally, authors bent on crafting realistic characters will give you a character who is so flawed that you can't like them. They make bad decisions so they seem more human, but their bad decisions only show the bad of humanity. You need to see the good, too.

In Devil's Kiss, Billi was rebelling against her legacy. I understood why, even if I didn't always agree with her actions. In this book, she has taken up the yoke of duty in the Knight's Templar. She's hardened by the loss of her dearest friend. Now, she is all about duty. Her duty requires her to make tough decisions on a regular basis. Billi doesn't have the life of the average teenager, and she never will. But the world needs her sacrifices to be protected from the Unholy, monsters who prey on humans. In this book, she might be forced to make the toughest decision of all. If she has to kill an innocent child to save the world, can she do that?

Mr. Chadda manages to write this teenage girl in an amazingly convincing manner. He doesn't forget what and who she is, but he endows her with a maturity that is realistic, given her relentless upbringing and the burden she carries in her life. I love young adult fiction, although there are some books that I can't get into

because they don't have the complexity I like in a story. This is not one of those. If there were more YA books like this one, I think that many adult readers would stop looking down their noses at YA and calling it infantile. This book is mature and challenging enough to keep any fan happy, and done in such a way as to contain suitable and interesting subject matter for teenage readers.

Russia and its Folklore:

This reader has a fascination and a love for Russia, its culture, and its folklore. I was overjoyed to see how well Chadda writes about modern Russia. I felt as though I took a tour of the Moscow of today, and he even takes us to the barren wasteland of Chernobyl, twenty years after the nuclear meltdown that made it uninhabitable by humans. Each scene gives a full picture of Russia, how the past, future, and present mingle in a Gordian fashion. On top of that is his use of the old folklore of Baga Yaga and Vasilisa. Baga Yaga scared me in the folk stories I read. She's even more scary in this. In this story, she is the Dark Goddess, with a whole pack of ruthless female werewolves dedicated to her service. I loved how Chadda took this folklore and made it such an important part of his story.

Action, Danger, Interpersonal Relationships and a Bit of Romance:

I tell you what, I am glad I am not Billi. Facing the situations she does would be way too much for me. But it's real life for her, whether it's saving a young girl from ravenous wolves, or dealing with corrupt humans. Operating on little to no sleep. Trying to find the way out of seemingly impossible situations, only to do it again the next day. And facing a formidable witch who has the power to end the world. This book is action-packed. The storyline twists and turns, and the sense of risk never abates. I loved seeing the characters fight their way through one situation to another, and the sense of family between the Templars. These guys are seasoned, hardened warriors. Mr. Chadda does a great job of writing about modern day warriors and their weapons, and doesn't result to info-dumping to show just how knowledgeable they are about their weapons.

I am glad to see that the relationship between Billi and Arthur has improved. Arthur trusts Billi to do to the right thing, gives her a lot of autonomy in doing it, and listens to her advice. He realizes that she has earned his respect the hard way, and that she's an incredible asset in their battle against the Unholy. I loved the daughter/father relationship in this book, because Arthur isn't only Billi's father, he's also her commanding officer, which takes precedence most times, but it's clear how much Arthur cares about his daughter, and vice versa.

After the last book, in which she is betrayed by one love interest, and ends up losing another who was an important part of her life, Billi isn't exactly looking for love, and she doesn't have time for it even if she was open to it. Nevertheless, sparks fly between her and Tsarevich Ivan Alexeiovitch Romanov, the surviving heir to the Imperial Romanov dynasty. Yes, that could have come off as a cheesy, over the top touch, but it did not. In a story in which Russia is an intrinsic part of its fabric, it totally made sense. I liked Ivan. He had the arrogance and regality I expected of a young heir to the Russian Imperial throne, but he was also tough, adaptable, and good-hearted. I liked that he respected Billi for the strong young warrior that she was, as well as seeing the beauty in her. I liked seeing their relationship bloom, in the most adverse of circumstances. It added a nice touch of romance to this dark story, but it didn't inappropriately take over the story, as both know that there is not much time for snuggling and flirting.

Oh, the Horror!:

This author writes horror so well. He does the atmosphere beautifully, with just enough violence to make the reader shudder, but not over the top. The menace of Baga Yaga, the werewolves, and humans who seem to lack any semblance of humanity. And yet, the bad guys aren't all bad, and the good guys, not all good. It's all about motives, isn't it? That sense of ambivalence takes a horror novel to the next level.

Final Thoughts:

I loved this book. I devoured it, and wanted more when I finished. I wish Sarwat Chadda would write faster, because I can't wait to read his next book about Billie and the Knight's Templar!

Jordan says

4,5/5

<http://wandering-world.skyrock.com/31...>

Dark Kiss est une suite juste époustouflante à Devil's Kiss : encore plus chargé en action, en adrénaline, en sentiments intenses et en passion dévorante, ce roman est vraiment parfait sous tous les angles. J'ai adoooooré retrouver Billie et le monde toujours si particulier et enchanteur des Templiers. De plus, l'auteur nous entraîne avec lui au coeur de la Russie, un voyage spectaculaire et sensationnel qui m'a complètement séduit. Le seul (gros) bémol qui m'interdit d'attribuer la note de 5/5 au roman provient de la fin. En effet, la conclusion du livre est bien trop ouverte pour que je puisse l'apprécier, mais j'y reviendrai plus tard dans ma chronique.

Dès le départ, je me suis senti happé pas le récit ! Quel bonheur ! J'avais complètement oublié l'effet qu'avaient pu avoir les Templiers sur moi, tout comme leurs histoires et leurs expériences. Surtout que les premières pages nous plongent directement dans le vif du sujet ! En effet, lorsque nous retrouvons Billie, c'est pour qu'elle se fasse attaquer quelques minutes plus tard ! De quoi vraiment nous couper le souffle immédiatement ! Billie est toujours une héroïne que j'aime énormément. Vive, mature alors qu'elle est très jeune (quinze ans seulement !), déterminée, passionnée, aimante, drôle et très très émouvante, elle m'a totalement séduit. J'ai vraiment beaucoup aimé plonger dans cet océan de suspense, de frissons et d'exaltation une nouvelle fois à ses côtés. J'avais vraiment oublié à quel point elle pouvait être un protagoniste extraordinaire, à la fois sincère, authentique et profond. Vraiment, si les romans étaient dotés de plus de Billie, je serai la personne la plus heureuse au monde ! Elle est juste extraordinaire !

D'ailleurs niveau combat, elle s'y connaît aussi ! Comme je l'ai dit, l'action nous étreint rapidement dans les premières pages. Enfin c'est vraiment réducteur de dire ça, car les rebondissements et les surprises sont des éléments omniprésents durant toute notre lecture. En effet, les combats ne s'arrêtent jamais, les recherches et découvertes non plus, tout comme les coups de théâtre fracassants et les moments où nous sommes obligés de nous ronger les ongles !!! Je n'ai pas arrêté de ressentir cette boule au ventre à la fois stressante et magnifiquement saisissante. Celle qui nous pousse à veiller tard la nuit pour en savoir encore plus. A tourner les pages sans que l'on s'en aperçoive car notre esprit est en parfaite harmonie avec l'intrigue. J'ai complètement craqué et succombé pour l'univers de Billie. Sarwat Chadda sait extrêmement bien s'y prendre pour nous insuffler des émotions fortes et bouleversantes. Tantôt de la joie, tantôt de la crainte. Tantôt du soulagement, tantôt de l'angoisse à l'état pur. Ouaaaaaaw ! J'ai adoré ça !

L'auteur nous permet, en plus de frémir d'extase et d'horreur, de voyager au coeur d'un pays rarement décrit dans les romans : la Russie ! Et là, ouaw ouaw ouaw ! Toute la mythologie mise en place est juste sublime ! Les légendes, les créatures que nous rencontrons, les alliances qui vont se mettre en place avec les Templiers... Tout m'a énormément séduit ! Je pouvais presque sentir le froid glacial caresser ma peau tant les descriptions étaient prenantes ! Surtout que cette contrée cache bien des choses, ce qui m'a permis de complètement m'immerger dans l'histoire et de visualiser les scènes à la perfection. C'était comme regarder un film. Tout est fait pour que nous soyons pris corps et âme dans le récit. Et vous savez ce qui est le pire dans cette histoire ? C'est que ça fonctionne. Une fois que nous sommes lancés, difficile de lâcher Dark Kiss !

Surtout que dans ce second opus, nous rencontrons une multitude de personnages tous plus uniques les uns que les autres ! Monsieur Chadda maîtrise complètement son histoire, et ça se sent. En effet, il est parvenu à créer des protagonistes secondaires aux rôles décisifs dans la vie de Bille, à la fois profonds, vrais et touchants au possible. Je pense entre autre à Vasilisa, cette petite fillette au destin tragique qui m'a beaucoup ému. Le lien qui va se créer entre elle et Billie est également très attendrissant. J'ai adoré découvrir la relation qui va s'instaurer entre elles. Autant le roman peut être violent et chargé de suspense, autant les passages entre ces deux jeunes femmes peuvent être doux et déchirants. Un superbe travail de la part de l'auteur !

Mais ce n'est pas tout ! Un autre héros va posséder un rôle capital dans l'intrigue du livre ! C'est un garçon, répondant au nom d'Ivan... Très vite, l'alchimie entre lui et Billie va être palpable. Mais leur relation va être semée d'embûches et de détours imprévus, exactement ce que j'aime ! Leur histoire est réellement convaincante et romantique, à la fois poétique et frappante. Même s'ils ne s'avouent pas vraiment leurs sentiments, on sent bien qu'ils sont présents. Sauf que tout n'est pas aussi simple que cela. Billie et Ivan ont tous les deux vécu des choses difficiles, et accorder leur confiance n'est pas spécialement évident. Voit alors le jour une romance plaisante et enivrante, que j'ai beaucoup apprécié !

Le roman se lit très rapidement, et nous atteignons la fin sans vraiment nous en rendre-compte. L'histoire est vraiment passionnante, et j'ai particulièrement aimé l'aspect "fin du monde" qui se détache du récit. Les volcans qui explosent, le Grand Hiver qui risque de s'abattre sur le monde et d'anéantir l'humanité...

Vraiment, ces thèmes sont exceptionnellement prenants. D'ailleurs, l'auteur a caché un message écolo assez utile et sympa à découvrir. En effet, la nature et les actions de l'Homme sur cette dernière sont des thèmes assez récurrents dans le roman. La pollution également, ou encore le nucléaire et la façon dont nous devrions traiter la Terre. Même si cet aspect de l'intrigue n'apporte pas grand chose au roman, j'ai trouvé cela très ingénieux de la part de Sarwat Chadda d'introduire ces sujets environnementaux dans son livre !

J'en arrive donc au gros défaut de Dark Kiss : sa fin. Mon dieu, mon dieu, mon dieu. Je déteste conclusions ouvertes, mais là c'est carrément le summum. Surtout que ce tome est celui qui clôturera la saga ! Nous devrions donc avoir une vraie fin, bien fermée, bien propre. Mais là, c'est tout le contraire qui se passe ! J'ai deux "vraies" conclusions COMPLÈTEMENT opposées en tête pour cette histoire, c'est dire ! Une horrible, et un happy-end. Je choisis la bonne fin comment ? COMMENT ? Non franchement, dire que je suis frustré est un euphémisme ! J'ai lu hier que l'auteur travaillait sur un possible tome 3... Qu'il le sorte !!! Je le lirai évidemment avec bonheur, mais, surtout, je connaîtrais enfin VRAIMENT la dernière partie des aventures de Billie. Quelle horreur, mais quelle horreur cette fin !!!

En résumé, Dark Kiss est un roman à la hauteur de mes espérances, aussi bon (voire plus) que son prédécesseur. Malgré une conclusion que j'ai détesté et qui supprime un peu de son charme à l'histoire, le roman reste spectaculaire. Nous rencontrons des personnages touchants et poignants, et nous retrouvons avec joie notre Billie adorée. Les rebondissements sont tous géniaux et inattendus, tout en cachant un message vert et écologique très juste et qui touche à des sujets d'actualité. Un second et dernier tome enchanteur pour une saga passionnante qui, je l'espère, deviendra une trilogie ! Je croise les doigts car Billie et ses aventures me manquent déjà et que j'ai vraiment, vraiment, besoin d'une fin qui réponde à toutes mes questions !

All Things Urban Fantasy says

Review courtesy of All Things Urban Fantasy

I was hoping, really hoping, that Billi and I would get along better in DARK GODDESS than we did in DEVIL'S KISS, but after the first chapter, I realized if anything, she was worse.

The opening scene involves Billi and another Templar fighting werewolves. A little girl, Vasilisa, barely

escapes after witnessing both her parents brutally attacked and (mostly) eaten right in front of her. The next chapter picks up with Billi complaining about having to share a room with the traumatized little girl who cries and is afraid of being left alone and wondering if Vasilisa was even worth saving as she prys the little girl's hand off her and slams a door in her face. Seriously, Billi has firmly established herself in my mind as one of the most selfish characters I have ever read.

The romance was once again trite and overly dramatic, this time with a princely warrior descendent of the famous Romanov family. I never once bought into it. The villain in DARK GODDESS was more interesting and involved a werewolf pack who worshipped the witch/goddess Baba Yaga, and the writing itself was still good. I didn't bring this up in the previous review, but there are a number of religious statements about both Christianity and Islam (Billi is somehow both) that manage to be offensive on both sides.

Overall, I appear to be in the minority here with the Billi SanGreal series, so you might want to check out some of the other reviews linked below, but Knights Templar mythology and good writing aside, this series isn't for me.

Sexual Content:
Kissing

Amy Smith says

Not to my taste: after an engaging start, the first chapter bogged down for me in a whole lot of explaining that didn't intrigue me.

whyisgamora says

Honestly way better than I expected it to be. Oh who am I kidding it was GREAT. Honestly, this isn't a series that continuously follows each other, but I love bookS with big plots that can stand on their own and this was definitely one of them. If you're looking for action from start to finish, I would totally recommend this book.

Darren Hartwell says

I loved Devil's Kiss and its kick-ass heroine and I have been looking forward to reading the sequel ever since; but has Mr Chadda been able to produce a second book worthy of the first? The answer is a resounding yes - I enjoyed every moment of this.

As with Devil's Kiss Mr Chadda does not waste time easing us into his story; he kicks it off with Billi slap bang in the middle of another terrifying scene, this time up against a couple of werewolves. How we love werewolves at The Book Zone - none of your glamorous vampires with smouldering eyes and rakish good looks for us boys, thank you! We much prefer the animal ferocity of the wolfman. But it is here that Mr Chadda delivers his first knock-out surprise - his werewolves belong to an all-female pack known as the Polenitsy, who roam the forests of Russia and worship the dark goddess of the book's title, the terrifying

Baba Yaga. But don't go thinking that because they are female they are any less deadly than your stereotypical male werewolf - these creatures are every bit as ruthless and violent, and it is not just their bite that can turn someone into one of their kind either, their claws are just as deadly.

One of the things I love the most about Mr Chadda's stories is the effort he obviously puts into research, and then the personal spin he twists into this to create his own plot elements. The Polenitsy appear in Russian legends as formidable warrior women - the Chadda twist makes them werewolves. The Bogatyr appear in Russian folk epics as protectors of the realm - twisted around Chadda-style and they become the Russian equivalent of Billi's Templar Knights, Christian warriors fighting against evil for even longer than the Knights themselves. And then there is Tunguska - site of a devastating meteor strike more than a century ago, and now..... no, that would be giving too much away. It takes an inventive mind to pick these elements out of hours and hours of research and then mould them into a story like Dark Goddess, and yet Sarwat Chadda manages to do this seamlessly.

Having just used that word, I fear that I have no choice but to use it again, but this time to describe Mr Chadda's plotting, for there is no better word to describe it than seamless. Devil's Kiss, whilst being a superb debut novel for the author, had a fairly linear plot with only a handful of twists throughout. Dark Goddess is a far more complicated work, and is even better for it. Few of the new characters are what they initially seem, what is perceived as evil at first may surprise you later in the book, and vile actions such as the slaughter of innocents are sometimes reasoned and believed to be for the greater good by their perpetrators. This book really will keep you guessing until the end, but this end is ultimately very satisfying in that the various twisting plot threads are neatly brought together and resolved with a skill usually seen in far more experienced authors than Mr Chadda.

At the end of my review of Devil's Kiss I stated that "Devil's Kiss finishes on a particularly harrowing note for Billi and I am intrigued to find out where the story will take her next as she "throws herself into the brutal regime of Templar duties with utter abandon"." Without giving too much away, that book finished with Billi being hurt both emotionally and physically, and we are reminded of these moments throughout Dark Goddess (you really must read these books in the correct sequence in order to get the most out of them). Mr Chadda uses this sequel to really develop Billi's character even further, partly through her slightly warmer relationship with her father, but more through her interaction with Vasilisa, a small girl that Baba Yaga wants to devour in order to gain her incredible powers, and then through Billi's growing relationship with Ivan Alexeivich Romanov, Bogatyr and descendent of the princess Anastasia Romanov (yet another Chadda twist-on-fact). Ivan is another troubled teenager who has had to confront and fight evil on an almost daily basis, and in many ways is a male version of our Billi, and Sarwat Chadda skilfully develops their initial mistrust of each other into a relationship where they will risk their lives for each other (ok... so they kiss as well, but boys, it really is only a very small element of the story.... there's none of this Twilight rubbish from Mr Chadda).

It is difficult to define exactly which genre this book belongs to as there are so many competing elements. It is a fantastic action story, with the fight scenes even better than those in Devil's Kiss. But there are also moments of extreme horror - some of the werewolf attacks are very ferocious, and there is one scene where Billi is shown a lorry container full of bodies which is particularly gruesome. Action? Adventure? Horror? One thing it isn't is a Romance!!!

On the evidence of first Devil's Kiss and now Dark Goddess I believe that Sarwat Chadda is here to stay and although I am sure it is some way off I can't wait to find out what he has in store for Billi in the future.

Aisling says

I won't go lower than 3 stars with this book, but reading Dark Goddess after Devil's Kiss, it was all rather anti-climatic. I know. Possible apocalypse and scary all-powerful psychic witch, anti-climatic??

But yeah, it was. I felt like the first book had so much emotional depth with sacrificing of Kay, the many twists and turns, this second installment wasn't that great. The wonderful thing about Devil's Kiss was it's ability to get under your skin and really make you **feel**. Dark Promise didn't really make me care all that much at all. Vasilisa was a boring mere irritation and honestly, I didn't give a crap about whether (view spoiler) What I really want was more relationship development, as a reader, I cared more about how Billi moved on after Kay, than the predictable plotline with 2D villains. So the world might end? Boring. Heard that one before. Gee, I wonder if Billi will save it in time?? With the whole world ending plot, readers already **know** the world ain't gonna end and somehow our heroine's gonna save the day, what we really want to know about the development and relationships along the journey. We don't care about a stupid child added in as a plot device. There wasn't much to her except that she was *childish*, and scared of everything, the moment she was introduced I was already groaning with aggravation anticipating the looming dragg-iness she was going to bring.

Stuff I saw coming:

- Losing Vasilisa. Check.
- Billi going on a long search for her. Check.
- Other minor villains in the way. Check.
- Defeating minor villains. Check.
- Billi finding the annoying child. Check.
- Billi facing the bigger threat. Check.
- Billi struggling against all odds but gets through it all. Check.
- The witch is 'dead'. And again, check.

Another sidenote, all Billi's dreams were freaking meaningless. Nothing was confirmed, they just seemed slot in for an 'air of mystery', and to fill up the pages. Not for any purpose but to highlight Billi's inner pain I suppose.

The hardening and sense of duty Billi felt was truly realistic and I appreciated the development in her character, but... well, I'm sorry but nothing else really happened. It never really carried through.

Argh!! What more is there to say?? It just paled in comparison to the first. It wasn't worth the read.
