

The Shadow Walker

Rabbi Yehuda Fine

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The Shadow Walker successfully shows that evil is as present in the modern world as ever.

A modern-day yeshiva rabbi takes on society's seedy underbelly and a deranged killer in Rabbi Yehuda Fine's *The Shadow Walker*.

Eitan has spent his life fighting evil. A rabbi and a man of the streets, he is disgusted by what society has become. He sees people persecuted and abused on a daily basis and has made it his mission to be a savior to those who have been taken advantage of. Through his network of vigilantes, he tries to address the worst of humanity's crimes.

When Eitan is confronted with unsolved murders in which Chinese calligraphy is engraved on the dead bodies, he knows he's met his match. He embarks on a mission to stop the monster who is committing the crimes.

Switching between the perspectives of Eitan, known as the Shadow Walker, and Solomon, the Dark Man who is his nemesis, *The Shadow Walker* attempts to explore the question of what could drive one person to become a hero while another one becomes a deranged villain.

The book is packed with details about violence. From fighting styles to different types of weapons to information about history's most notorious acts of genocide, *The Shadow Walker* is heavy with in-depth information about the world's many horrors. It also contains a wealth of knowledge about the Torah, Jewish culture, and rabbinical life.

Characters have a tendency to go off on long, distracting soliloquies that throw off the pace of an otherwise action-packed book and detract from character development. Sentence structures are baffling and winding, and immersion in the story becomes hard to achieve.

Adjectives are plentiful—as many as six may modify one noun—and make for awkward reading. Flashbacks are overused, appearing as often as in every other scene. The timeline becomes confusing as a result, and the momentum of the story is negatively impacted. Chapter breaks come at odd points.

Though Eitan and Solomon are given enough of a backstory to make their characters interesting and memorable, the many other characters in the book get lost in the details; none stand out as being more than a means to an end or a new vehicle for exploring potential horrors.

The Shadow Walker successfully shows that evil is as present in the modern world as ever and that there will always be good and bad forces locked in a battle for the upper hand.

ANGELA MCQUAY (August 2, 2017)

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