



## A Clockwork Heart

*Liesel Schwarz*

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**FOR BETTER OR CURSE.** That might as well have been the wedding vow of Elle Chance and her new husband, the ex-Warlock Hugh Marsh in the second book of this edgy new series that transforms elements of urban fantasy, historical adventure, and paranormal romance into storytelling magic.

As Elle devotes herself to her duties as the Oracle—who alone has the power to keep the dark designs of Shadow at bay—Marsh finds himself missing the excitement of his former life as a Warlock. So when Commissioner Willoughby of the London Metropolitan police seeks his help in solving a magical mystery, Marsh is only too happy to oblige. But in doing so, Marsh loses his heart . . . literally.

In place of the flesh-and-blood organ is a clockwork device—a device that makes Marsh a kind of zombie. Nor is he the only one. A plague of clockwork zombies is afflicting London, sowing panic and whispers of revolution. Now Elle must join forces with her husband's old friend, the Nightwalker Loisa Beladodia, to track down Marsh's heart and restore it to his chest before time runs out.

## A Clockwork Heart Details

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Author : Liesel Schwarz

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Genre : Science Fiction, Steampunk, Fantasy, Romance, Paranormal, Vampires

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## From Reader Review A Clockwork Heart for online ebook

### Kimberly (Book Swoon) says

**WHY I WANTED THIS BOOK:** After reading A CONSPIRACY OF ALCHEMISTS, the first book by The Chronicles of Light series by Liesel Schwarz, I knew that I wanted to read more of this fantastic world where Steampunk and the Paranormal collide. I was excited to continue reading about Elle and Marsh's story as a newly married couple, and Liesel Schwarz's fantastical realm of Shadow and Light.

**SUMMARY:** This is the second book in the Chronicles of Light and Shadow series by Liesel Schwarz, and it picks up shortly after A Conspiracy of Alchemists ends. This time around the story takes place mostly in London, and Elle and Marsh are now married. Both are having trouble adjusting to their new roles as a married couple and their involvement in the Shadow Realm. Marsh worries about the dangers that surrounds Elle as The Oracle, and misses his powers as an Warlock. Elle wants only to fly and keep her independence, without the ties of being the Oracle nor the restrictions she faces in the traditional role as Marsh's wife. After an argument with Elle, resulting in her taking a charter to Singapore, Marsh decides to accept an invitation from Commissioner Willoughby of the London police asking his help solving case. A mystery that involves magic and the Shadow Realm. When Elle returns from her flight she finds Marsh missing. Now she will need to learn to use her powers as The Oracle to enter the Shadow Realm to find him. What she finds is a devious plan involving Clockwork Hearts, Zombies, and La Dame Blanche who has literally stolen Marshes heart. Now Elle must race against time to save Marsh before it's too late!

**SETTING:** There is definitely a darker and more Paranormal tone to A CLOCKWORK HEART. You can feel that there is much more at stake in this story and the tension is higher. I really turned the pages on this one-dying to know what happened to Marsh and could Elle save him in time. The overall tone is still a Steampunk, and just as fun and entertaining as it's predecessor, but now there is a darker aspect to it. Liesel Schwarz has included some fantastic new "Mythic Characters" to the story as well as more time spent in the paranormal world of the Shadow Realm. One of my favorite scenes involves Elle entering the dreamy land of the Shadow Realm, and meeting a intriguing character named "Jack" and it involves some fabulously creative magic and the use of Marsh and Elle's wedding bands. The symbolism of the wedding bands was brilliant!

**CHARACTERS:** ELLE is just as fun and passionate and as before, but really learns a lot about herself in this story. She learns about balancing her new newly married life and being The Oracle with her love of flying and independence. Elle truly starts to become a heroine in this story, one who learns about love and sacrifice, all the while fighting Zombies, mad scientist, and a woman who wants to keep Marsh for herself.

**HUGH MARSH** is just as dashing and charismatic as before, and desperately wants to enjoy his new life with his wife, but misses being a Warlock. Unfortunately Marsh is missing in action during a large part of the story due to being kidnapped. There is some near heartbreak moments involving Marsh's kidnapping and Elle, and it nearly broke my heart as this couple suffers. But I know (HOPE) in book three, THE SKY PIRATES, that the author will (PLEASE) give Elle and Marsh the "Happily Ever After" they deserve!

**THE BARONESS LOISA BELODODIA**, who is a Nightwalker and niece to the famous Vlad, returns and plays a larger role in this story as she helps Elle to solve the mystery behind Marsh's kidnapping and the Tickers. Loisa's character is enchanting and deadly at the same time, and I adore her character as much as Elle's.

ADELE the Absinthe drinking fairy is just as mischievous as before, and continues to add additional insight into the story with her alternating point of view placed sporadically throughout the story.

NEW CHARACTERS: CLOTHILDE or La Dame Blanche (a lady in white) is a marvelous villain in the story. Full of dark and supernatural powers, this is one villain you'll love to hate. She has terrible plans involving Zombies and Clockwork Hearts.

OLD JACK is an intriguing character Elle meets in the enchanted forest of the Shadow Realm, and I hope to see more of him in SKY PIRATES.

RICHARD "DUCKY" RICHARDSON is an old friend from flight school and was the brother Elle never had. His loveable and comedic behavior helped lighten the story when needed, and also helped join in on the fight against the Clockwork Zombies.

CAPTAIN LOGAN DASHWOOD the owner who lost the Iron Phoenix in a game of cards with Elle. I'm keeping my fingers crossed and hoping to see more of him in the next book THE SKY PIRATES.

SWOON LEVEL: Crush

THE ROMANCE: There isn't much room for romance in this story, instead the story focuses on Elle learning to use her powers as The Oracle and saving Marsh. Although most of the romance is missing due to Marsh being kidnapped, Elle did learn a lesson about her marriage to Marsh that is really important to their future.

SWOON-WORTHY MOMENT:

Marsh turned and smile at her. "So, could I perhaps persuade you to forgo your tea and join me in a drink?" he said.

Elle gave him her most alluring smile. "You might. And if you'll bring mine to me upstairs in a little while, who knows? I might even invite you to join me."

Marsh gave her a wicked grin. "Invitation accepted, but don't blame me if Mrs. Hinges is annoyed because we're late for dinner."

WHAT I LIKED: The additional Paranormal elements and darker tone of the story. I especially enjoyed Elle's dreamlike visits into the Shadow Realm, and the fabulously evil villainess La Dame Blanche.

WHAT I MISSED: Although I enjoyed Elle as the main focus of this story and her learning to use her Oracle abilities, but I MISSED MARSH!

THE ENDING: Be prepared for action, tension, and possible heartbreak, as the last third of the book ratchets up the tension, and suspense will be high!

THE RATING: 4.5 Stars. I really liked it!

RECOMMENDATION: Steampunk and Paranormal lovers.

PLEASE NOTE: An ARC was provided by NetGalley/Publisher in exchange for my review. Thank you Random House/Del Rey for the review opportunity.

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## **Melliane says**

3.5/5

Mon avis en Français

My English review

I liked the first volume of this steampunk series and I was curious to see what would happen with the second one. It must be said that Elle has now accepted her destiny, but it is so far from what she wanted ... However, she continues her life alongside her husband Marsh. But this life is not what she dreamed of and the obligations make her want to fly and control her vessels to get away from it all. Yet she is not the only one who made sacrifices and our young heroine does not seem to realize that her husband has done a lot more than she seems to see. He gave up everything for her and he now finds himself married to a woman who never stays with him, and with a life routine eventually settled. But everything will change when to assist the police he finds himself trapped by a strange creature and turned into a kind of zombie. Although Elle is determined to fix things, to find and save him, but can she really do that?

I had a little hard to get into the story at the beginning of the novel, but I confess that after the first part I was really curious to see what would happen. I must say that I was very intrigued by this new evil called La Dame Blanche and I really wanted to see how far she was willing to go. It was also very sad to see our two main characters with such feelings, trying to understand each other in vain and yet loving the other unconditionally. We can understand the behavior of our heroine but it is true that our heart aches for her husband. She did not realize what she is doing and only thinks of her own person. Of course, she will evolve in the novel, understanding the mistakes she made in the hope that it is not too late for her to try to fix it.

There are also all the characters that we had the pleasure to discover in the previous volume, as her father, the Professor; Loisa, our beloved vampire; Adele our little fairy and Patrice ... but many others as well. I confess that I am very curious to find out more about Old Jack because it is a new character more than intriguing. But I am convinced that after such a novel we'll have the opportunity to meet him soon. The end of the book totally surprised me, I did not expect such a direction and I admit that I was really sad to see how it all would end. I am especially curious to see how everything is going to be resolved now. It was an enjoyable read and I will wait to read the next Elle's adventures to see how she will solve her many problems and threats looming in the dark.

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## **Jessie (Ageless Pages Reviews) says**

Well, that was pretty much a waste of time. Bloated, superficial, and a much weaker effort than the first novel.

Review to come.

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## **AH says**

*Initial Thoughts* 3.5-4.0 stars. A bit of a slow start but once the book got into the groove, it was quite

entertaining. Elle is a kickass heroine - she is brave, fierce, and extremely independent. Loved the mix of steampunk and fae lore.

#### *The Review*

The beautiful cover of this book attracted me to this series. I'm a fan of steampunk and any sign of it gets my interest. **A Clockwork Heart** combines steampunk, magic, and the fae for an exciting romp through London at the turn of the 20th century.

I think what appeals to me about this series is the strong female characters. Take Eleanor, or Elle as an example. Elle, recently married to Hugh Marsh is not happy being a traditional wife. She's an airship pilot and is building her shipping business much to the chagrin of her husband who would like to see her at home a little more. Elle is also a powerful oracle although she has not yet figured out the extent of her powers. I loved Elle's strength and her resolve.

Loisa is another character that I adored. A vamire or Nightwalker, Loisa was also a good friend to Elle as well as a powerful ally.

Then there's Clothilde, La Dame Blanche. Clothilde was one scary character with plans to take over the city of London with her clockwork heart implanted victims.

I enjoyed how the author integrated the steampunk elements with magic and the fae. Part of the story is told from Adele the absinthe fairy's point of view and she is a fascinating character. You're never really sure where her loyalties lie, though she had an attachment to Elle.

Elle's foray into the Shadow World was really cool. I loved how Elle and Hugh's wedding rings had magical powers and served as a thread between Elle and Hugh.

While the story starts off slowly, the action and adventure picks up rapidly. The last third of the book will keep you on the edge of your seat. **A Clockwork Heart** is a delightful read and should appeal to readers who enjoy a mix of steampunk and magic. It's going to be a long wait for book 3 **Sky Pirates**.

#### **Review posted on Badass Book Reviews.**

*Thank you to NetGalley and Random House/Del Ray for a review copy of this book.*

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#### **Visionary says**

Review can be found here courtesy of Romance Junkies:  
<http://romancejunkiesreviews.com/artm...>

Eleanor (Elle) Chance is newly wedded and now Viscountess Greychester. Life amongst the peerage takes a little for her to grow accustomed too, just as difficult as grudgingly accepting her birthright as the world's Pythia. Thanks to her husband her dreams of owning her own charter flight business becomes a reality.

Hugh Marsh, Viscount Greychester and former warlock, resigned from the Advisory Council of Nations. To have a mortal life and family with Elle, Marsh willingly bound his powers. However, for all the sacrifices he made, he cannot shake the feeling it is one sided, that he is second best compared to her other love: flying.

Marsh and Elle are married but life is hardly the “happily ever after” like the storybooks. The two struggle to find the balance in the merger of their two lives. Elle fears that Marsh is being too smothering, too protective. She returns early from a charter to patch things up with her husband, only to learn of his disappearance. With the aid of some friends, she scours London in search for Marsh with little to no clues to help her.

I really like how Schwarz starts the story with it being several months after the two's wedding, how she did not make life picture perfect for the couple. The part where Marsh helped Elle accomplish her dreams made me smile and like his character more. One part in the story astonished me and tore at my heart. I was surprised over what Schwarz did to the character. However, it did add to the plot and acted as a catalyst to give Elle the push she needed. It reminded me of the adage “Don't know what you got until it's gone”. Loisa, from the first book, has a more prominent role and new friends introduced. Close to the end, it had me in tears.

A CLOCKWORK HEART is Schwarz's second book in the Chronicles of Light and Shadow series. She maintained the synchronized blending of fantasy, paranormal and steampunk from the first book with the second. The ending left me a little sad but it opens up promise for the next book.

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## **Jamie says**

**DISCLAIMER:** I received A Clockwork Heart as a publisher ARC through NetGalley in exchange for my honest review.

This review can also be found at [The Title Page](#)

**Rating:** 2 Stars

A Conspiracy of Alchemists was a great novel, it set the standard for the Liesel Schwarz steam-punk series. It was exciting with some strange flaws, but I opted to like it anyways.

A Clockwork Heart sadly fell flat of my expectations. While it was more interesting to read, the story was dry and everything seemed to work out a bit too perfectly. Elle is a completely different character than she was in the first novel, she's far too dependant on Marsh and seems incapable of functioning once he disappears from the novel, about 20% in.

The dialogue was filled with old-tymey banter, it gives you the feeling that the author was trying way too hard. There was a scene where I swore they said the term "*ever so slightly*" at least 18 times.

The new protagonist was too good to be true. An evil (but gorgeous) witch lady who can control the weather and wants Marsh for her own? And then, of course, her death comes by far too easily. The climax battle was overly confusing. It goes from a civil conversation between enemies to a battle of air balloons in a matter of

seconds.

The ending seemed harsh to me. I got the feeling that Schwarz was just trying way too hard to have an unhappy ending. The book went on way too long as well, it should have ended chapters before it did.

All in all, I was extremely disappointed with the novel, but because I liked the first one so much I will give Schwarz the benefit of the doubt and read the third when it comes out.

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### **Beth says**

Hugh Marsh and Elle Chance are having some difficulties with the many changes that have recently taken place in their lives. They are also adjusting to their new role as husband and wife. When Marsh is called upon to assist in a magical mystery he jumps at the chance but in doing so loses his heart.

Now hosting a clockwork organ, Marsh takes on a zombie like quality and Elle must track down his original heart before it's too late.

I found this story a little slow going with lots of world building and plot developing and not much riviting content. I enjoyed the first book in this series but found this book slightly less intriguing. I did notice that there was less technical details about the machinery which I definitely appreciated.

Schwartz has a very original and unique take on a steampunk created zombie. Her writing is detailed, edgy and extremely vivid. *A Clockwork Heart* is a paranormal romance, with a big scoop of steampunk twisted into an interesting and original tale.

I received this ARC copy of *A Clockwork Heart* from Random House Publishing Group - Del Rey Spectra in exchange for a honest review. This book is set for publication August 13, 2013.

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Liesel Schwarz's Website

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## **Jenny says**

4.5 stars

Amazing sequel!

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## **Jenny (Reading Envy) says**

What would a steampunk zombie look like?

That's okay, I'll wait.

Well, whatever you're thinking, I'm not sure you'll expect what will happen in this book. I enjoyed the first book in this series and while this one takes up the storyline, it takes it in unexpected directions. It isn't all girl-power flights and fighting TPTB. I was pleasantly surprised, and continue to be a fan of this hybrid steampunk-urban fantasy-romance.

*Given for review by NetGalley, which has not altered my opinion*

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## **Jody Ellis says**

'Classy steam punk in England with a dark ending' wraps up this book perfectly. The style reminded me of the writings of Kate Locke in The Immortal Empire, so be sure to give both a read. Like the Immortal Empire, I've come in half way, in book 2 instead of starting at book 1.

The fact I haven't read the first book didn't matter, Liesel did a great job of filling in the gaps without being distracting and gave just enough for the reader to follow.

Elle, our main character, is the weakest of characters in all facets, which certainly throws a curve ball. Despite her immense power, as being the Oracle, she never actually uses it, it would appear that being an Oracle only encompasses being able to feel light and dark. I'm not 100% sure what her power could actually do, aside from sound authoritative. In the end, the character who really shone and ensured things happened and that they got Hugh back, was the Nightwalker. How curious!

The book was written with fantastic balance, with each chapter giving you just enough that you want to start the next chapter, and before you know it that half hour read has become several.

The text never got tiresome, and I loved the fact that despite their immense love, it was not enough to save them. Hugh must walk the shadow, and Elle the light. As sadistic as it may come across, it is nice to not have a classical happy ending and instead tug at the heart strings of anyone who has ever loved, knowing that they are so close, but can never be together again. I had only wished, that we explored Elle a little more in how she processed the loss and then saw a bit more of Hugh as well.

Liesel touches on certain powers controlling the world through stock markets and thus money, and I really liked that touch, bringing an element of reality and conspiracy to the text that would draw in folks who watch the economy and perhaps also suspect that there is a pyramid scheme happening with the world in general.

Liesel has produced a book set in the 1900s but filled with modern whims with a steampunk spice, such as Liesel's inventive way of creating electricity. She was talented in describing her characters giving just enough to form the basics and then leaving the rest to a reader's imagination to see them in their own interpretation. Oddly, I didn't see Elle as the cover pictured her, I saw her as rounder and dressed differently.

The cover art did exactly as it should, and that is what caught my eye and drew me to the book in the first place. It showed all I needed to see. London, old fashioned, steam punk.

In all regards this book is fantastic, but didn't have enough wow factor to warrant a 5 star. I do look forward to reading others in the Chronicle of Light and Shadow.

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### **Heather says**

This bored me about halfway through, and Elle was much more off-putting to me in this novel. I understand the entire debate around women's rights and place in society, and breaking the myth of "women can't do/have it all." However, her complete naivete and disregard to her husband and marriage just infuriated me. I understand that marriage is a new experience to her, but she was not initially presented as a complete simpleton. More aggravating, is that it takes her best friend two sentences to entirely convince her that she is wrong to disregard her husband's feelings and concerns.

After the first half of the novel trying to start a women's rights movement, we have the switch to fix Marsh, which results in complete opposition with the first half. The second half is all love and complete dedication. With the setup, Elle is completely subservient to Marsh. Even though he is incapacitated, Elle's every move is to aid Marsh. I understand that she is doing it out of love, but the way the novel is constructed juxtaposes the freedom of the first half with subservience in the latter half.

Generally, I was just bored and done with it by the end. The ending was still slightly shocking, but I just couldn't find amusement in this one.

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### **Karissa says**

I got a copy of this book to review through NetGalley(dot)com. This is the second book in the Chronicles of Light and Shadow. The third book will be titled, Sky Pirates, and is due out in June of 2014. I absolutely adore this series. I loved the first book in this series and this book was even better. Elle is fantastic fun to read about and the steampunk elements in the story are really well done.

Elle and Marsh are having some trouble with their marriage. Elle loves Marsh but wants to be free to pilot her plane wherever she wants, she is also chafing at being forced to perform the duties of the Oracle. Marsh has given up his Warlock powers to be with Elle, but finds himself bored by her constant absences. While Elle takes a charter to Singapore, Marsh decides to help Commissioner Willoughby solve a strange mystery of missing people and tick-tock men. When Elle returns to find Marsh missing she doesn't know if it is a change of heart on his part or if something more sinister is going on.

I really enjoy these books a lot. They are wonderful steampunk reads with a paranormal element to them. They are incredibly engaging and well written and the main heroine is a lot of fun to read about.

Elle is spunky and fun and is struggling with something a lot of women struggle with when they get married. She wants to be her own woman and not lose herself in marriage, yet she desperately loves her husband and is struggling to balance the two. As in the last book she is hilarious, very resourceful and lots of fun to read about.

Nightwalker Loisa Beladodia was the other driving character in this book. She joins forces with Elle in the search for Marsh and is another incredibly fun character. She is petite and beautiful and absolutely vicious. She also is very witty and has a great sense of humor.

There are some new additions to the story. The evil White Lady is delightfully frightful. Old Jack, whom Elle meets in the Shadowlands, is absolutely intriguing.

The plot is well done and has a very historical investigative urban fantasy feel to it. There are tons of steampunk elements in the story and I absolutely loved that. A number of fantastical steampunk devices are well explained and they are incredibly creative. Schwarz has done her homework and she really does steampunk excellently.

There isn't a ton of romance in this book; it is mostly action, investigation, and mystery. I really found the story engaging and hard to put down and was absolutely on the edge of my seat trying to guess how things would turn out. The book ends very harshly and will probably upset some readers, but I enjoyed the ending and am curious as to how things will play out in future books.

Overall I absolutely loved this book. I love the characters; they are fun and entertaining. I love the world and the plot as well. In this book we are introduced to numerous fascinating steampunk devices, the Shadowlands, and a number of delightfully shady new characters.

Highly recommended to steampunk and urban fantasy fans out there. There isn't a ton of romance here but the world, characters, and steampunk elements are incredibly well done. I would recommend to those who enjoy *The Parasol Protectorate* by Gail Carriger, *The Clockwork Century* series by Cherie Priest, or the *Swinburne* and *Burton* series by Mark Hodder.

**Stef says**

It feels like mine is the heart that has been ripped from my chest. I have become very attached to these characters, and it was genuinely heartbreaking to reach the end of this second installment when I know the next one will be out in a year. So many loose ends are left and even though there is a moment of hope at the very very end of the story, there has been so much sorrow throughout the story that its hard to be expectant that anything in the next book will remove the sadness from Elle's story.

"Not all fairy tales begin with Happily Ever After. Some begin with it." If you are a fan of Shakespeare you know that if the wedding happens before the last act then the ensuing play is indeed a tragedy. I like that

Schwarz put that little nod to the classics at the beginning of this story, but knew that it foreshadowed dark things.

I really enjoyed the writing in this story. If its possible I think that the voice Schwarz gives to 19th century England amid a Steampunk revolution is even better than the first book, and I believed that the first book in this series was an exceptionally well done love story. My only quibble with this book would be that the final battle occurs too late in the story and happens all of a sudden when the searching part took up a good quarter of the book.

If you are looking for a good steampunk story or are gripped by the craze for modern vampire tales then this is definitely a good series to pick up. The last time I was this anguished over the end of a story was with Jo Graham's Black Ships and The Hand of Isis.

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### **Under the Covers Book Blog says**

It has been way too long since I read the first book in this series. I honestly wasn't sure if it was a good idea to read this without doing a refresher because I thought for sure I'd be completely lost. But I started with hope and my memory started to kick in as I got reading.

A CLOCKWORK HEART is almost an entirely different book than the first one for one main reason. In A CONSPIRACY OF ALCHEMISTS, our heroine Elle fights with the idea of the paranormal world and her place in it. All of that is at the forefront of this second book. Elle is now happily married to her warlock husband, she understands what she is, and she has no fears at going head first into the paranormal. What this book shows us is the more personal struggle that Elle is finding herself in. What is her place as Marsh's wife? How can she still be herself and do the things she's always found joy in while also making her husband feel as if she respects his position in society and her role as his wife? Of course, throw in some paranormal danger and there's the recipe for a solid story.

I am still very much a fan of Elle as the main heroine of this series. She's pretty fierce and unapologetic. She still wants to continue dealing with some of the harsher elements of society and continue being the pilot of her airship. She's not conventional and she doesn't want to be boxed in. By any rules of any world. But she also truly loves her husband! She's my favorite part about this book for sure.

I think fans of Gail Carriger's Parasol Protectorate series would enjoy this one. But be sure to read in order as I don't think this one would stand alone as well.

\*Reviewed by Francesca♥ ? Don't want to miss any of our posts? Subscribe to our blog by email! ? ♥

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### **Booknut says**

The cover's UP!!

Isn't it pretty?!

Fingers-crossed, Mr. Marsh and Elle *remain together*. Otherwise I see a hysterical sobbing-fest in my future!

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