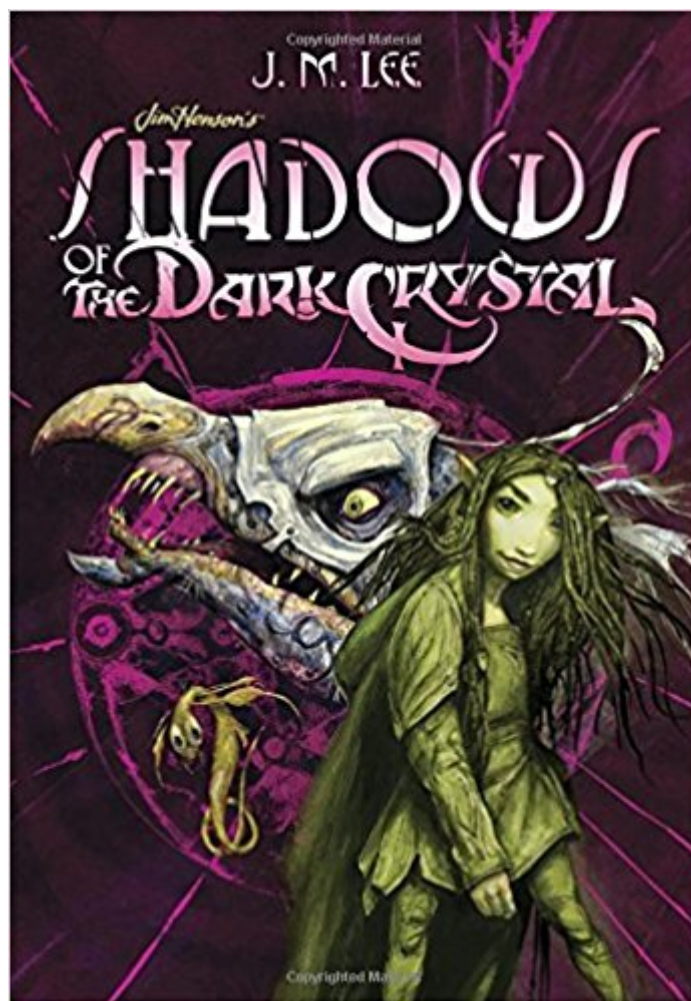


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# Shadows Of The Dark Crystal #1 (Jim Henson's The Dark Crystal)



## Synopsis

Praise for *Shadows of the Dark Crystal*: “With deft nods to the original *Dark Crystal* movie and a passionate attention to detail, the author has fashioned an impressive prequel. Fans (who will instantly recognize certain elements) and newcomers alike will find themselves immersed in a new narrative, with new protagonists and dangers to face. Readers who crave otherworld fantasy such as Jaleigh Johnson’s *The Mark of the Dragonfly* and Paul Durham’s *The Luck Uglies* will enjoy discovering this new series.” —*School Library Journal*

“While young readers probably won’t have seen the film, the books might lead them to it; even if they don’t have that point of reference, Henson’s world is richly imagined here, and it will be well worth the projected four books to explore the landscape, characters, and storylines.” —*The Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books*

“Characters and situations are compelling, and this first of a planned four-volume series aptly sets the stage and the conflict and tugs strongly on the heartstrings, setting readers up for more great adventures.” —*Booklist*

The first series of original novels ever set in the world of Jim Henson’s *The Dark Crystal*. *Shadows of the Dark Crystal* is set years before the events of the classic film and follows the journey of a young Gelfling woman who leaves her secluded home to uncover the truth surrounding the disappearance of her brother who has been accused of treason by the sinister Skeksis Lords. From the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gr 6-9 • Journey to Thra, a deeply magical world where one young gelfling woman is about to begin an epic quest that will shake Thra to its roots. Naia yearns to see the world beyond the swampland she calls home, yet she knows her role is to remain and become the matriarch of her people. However, when word comes that her twin brother has been accused of treason, Naia is the only one who can make the arduous journey to the Castle of Crystal. Determined to clear her brother's name and set things right, Naia finds all that she knows thrown into question. What is the dark and malevolent force that is creeping through the land? What connection does it have to the great crystal and the Skeksis Lords in the castle? What she learns will put her very life at risk and set in motion events that will determine the fate of her world. With deft nods to the original Dark Crystal movie and a passionate attention to detail, the author has fashioned an impressive prequel. Fans (who will instantly recognize certain elements) and newcomers alike will find themselves immersed in a new narrative, with new protagonists and dangers to face. Pencil sketch interior illustrations will help readers visualize uncommon characters. This author's debut fantasy title is the first of four that chronicle the early history of the Dark Crystal, but it remains to be seen if he can pull off an upbeat adventure when the dark future is already established. VERDICT Readers who crave otherworld fantasy such as Jaleigh Johnson's *The Mark of the Dragonfly* and Paul Durham's *The Luck Uglies* will enjoy discovering this new series. —Stephanie Whelan, New York Public Library --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

J. M. (Joseph) Lee is a novelist, writing mentor, illustrator, and graphic designer with a background in linguistics and film. As a writer, he finds the most rewarding stories in fusion genre, from nostalgic historical fantasies to gritty sci-fi westerns. On the side, he enjoys dabbling in experimental short fiction and drinking a lot of coffee. He is represented by Erzsi Deak/Hen&ink Literary Studio. From the Hardcover edition.

It was OK. I read this to get me pumped about the upcoming netflix series and as sort of a refresher on the land of Thra. And it was good for the first two thirds. The worldbuilding was the best. It was cool learning about the different races of gelflings, their adaptations and their customs. And Naia and Kylan do have a really sweet relationship together. And I swear that sounds shippy, but it's not. Naia and Kylan are completely platonic in this book and the way they care about one another support one another is so sweet. But after they split up it just kind of loses my interest. We start discovering that, gasp! the skeksis are evil. They play this up like it's a big twist but it's...well, I

mean, come on, most people have seen the movie. Even if you haven't, the skeksis look like half-skeletal nightmare birds- it's not that much of a stretch to think they'll turn out to be evil. Even if we aren't human beings brought up to naturally distrust scaly, beaky monsters, even then the twist doesn't work, because there isn't enough time spent building the skeksis up as trustworthy creatures. I just kind of wish the book didn't try to play up the skeksis' betrayal as a twist. I mean, showing the gelflings legit revere and trust the skeksis was so interesting! I kind of wish that vein had been mined more. But there was only one time before the climax when skeksis and Naia were in the same place at the same time, so we really didn't get to explore this. The whole idea that the gelflings put all their trust in these creatures as their protectors and just sort of view the mystics as these terrifying creatures that live in the woods- that's kind of neat. But mostly the climax was just so...heavy handed. And I realized that the whole thing had kind of been that way. That super serious high fantasy tone is throughout. You spend the beginning of the book feeling sad for Naia and Kylan and all the corrupted animals they meet along the way, that when you get to Gurjin's backstory you just kind of feel depleted. There are just, so few moments of mirth to break up all the sadness and tension. Anyway, if you want to get your toes wet in Thra lore, go ahead.

When this midsize 264 page hardcover was originally listed, there was no "Look inside" option making it hard for those of us who really enjoyed *Archaia Creation Myths* to know whether this was another collection of comic books. Obviously, that's no longer a problem, and though there are 8 full page black & white illustrations spread throughout the 27 chapters, it's not a collection of comics. Not shown by the "Look inside" is a map contained inside the front cover and repeated again at the back of northwest Thra, where these tales generally take place. It is bordered on the left by the Sifan Coast, which merges with the Silver Sea, rounding the Claw Mountains, to frame the top. The land mass is split by The Black River with only the Caves of Grot noted on the right. Geographically, the map extends done through the Crystal Sea, The Dark Wood, the Spriton Plains, to the Swamp of Sog. Noted within this left section is the Haclar, the Stonein the Wood, The Castle of the Crystal, Sami Thicket, and Great Smerth. If you were at the store and could hold the book in your hand, here's what you would learn from the back cover & inside dustcover.-----A shadow is spreading across the lands of the Gelfling and fracturing the world of Thra and corrupting all in its path. Long before the events of Jim

Henson's groundbreaking classic fantasy film The Dark Crystal, a young Gelfling woman called Naia finds herself summoned from her remote village to stand witness at the trial of her brother, who has been accused of treason by their Skeksis overlords. But Naia and her companions' arduous journey to the Castle of the Crystal reveals more than just clues to the true events surrounding her brother's act of betrayal. As something dark is overtaking Thra, and Naia's journey is taking her straight to the heart of it.

**Dustcover;** Deep within the remote swamplands of Sog, a young Gelfling woman called Naia encounters a mysterious silver-haired traveler who brings life altering news from All-Maudra. No longer bound to remain in her small village, Naia embarks on a journey to the Castle of the Crystal – the home of the Skeksis overlords who have accused her twin brother of treason. Unwilling to accept these accusations, Naia hopes to learn the truth about her brother. However, the truths that she uncovers reveal something far greater than the fate of one Gelfling or even the whole Gelfling race. Something dark is spreading throughout Thra, and there are those who will do whatever it takes to ensure that its true nature remains hidden.

I just blissfully returned to one of my favorite childhood stories. The fizzgigs, the land striders, the terrible skeksis – I'm preordering the next one. There are new creatures and it delves deeply into the gelfling way of life. Full of quests and excitement. I adored it!

Doesn't really do much for me as a fan of this mythology. Not EVERY step of a journey has to be described. Takes forever to go anywhere... Slow pace ruins everything, but then it's a trilogy so... doesn't inspire me to read the others when they come out. I

This reminded me of years gone by when Jim Henson and his Muppets reigned supreme and creativity flourished throughout the land.

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