ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

YOUNG ADULT FICTION

Hex: A Witch and Angel Tale
Ramona Wray
CreateSpace
978-1-4528-7157-8
Two Stars (out of Five)

In *Hex: A Witch and Angel Tale*, Ramona Wray's first novel, 17-year-old Lily's troubles go beyond normal teen angst. She is a witch, who can cast spells and perform magic. As if this weren't bad enough, she sees the future of everyone she touches, and the resulting pain makes her pass out. At the same time, two mysterious, handsome lads pursue her, each claiming to know her from a past life. Sweet, devoted, passionate Ryder eventually becomes her boyfriend, with imperious yet charming Lucian as his rival. Lily must figure out who she was in her past life and why Ryder and Lucian fight over her before a terrible hex overtakes them all.

Lily and Ryder are only somewhat developed characters. Lily is a book-smart girl with a matter-of-fact way of looking at her situation, even as she describes things with teenage hyperbole. Ryder is caring and tender, making it easy to see why Lily falls for him. Their love is torrid, sexy, and believable. Unfortunately, neither character's past is fully revealed. As the story opens, Lily says Ryder has been attending her school for a year; flashbacks to that first year would have given the couple more history and lent more credence to the assertion that Ryder is the most desired boy in the school. For Lily's part, readers are told about times in the past when she touched someone, learned their future, and fell unconscious from the pain, but such a thing never happens in the novel's present, rendering her power of foresight seemingly pointless. Furthermore, Lily's powers are not demonstrated until the end of the story. Lucian is hated by Lily from the outset. In contrast to Ryder, he does comparatively little to win her over. For the novel's ending to truly work, more of a bond should have been established between Lily and Lucian.

Plotting moves in fits and starts. Events occur with little foreshadowing, as though scenes exist solely to move the plot along, instead of existing to build character and suspense. The hex itself is distractingly convoluted, with new pieces added late in the story. There is, however, an unexpected twist. Fans of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight Saga* will swoon over this novel with its epic supernatural

love affair and pangs of teenage angst.

Jill Allen