



Right of Capture

Isadora Deese

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Genetic evolution, corporate interests, and politics collide in Isadora Deese's *Right of Capture*. Focusing on two remarkable siblings, this page-turning science-fiction thriller highlights issues impacting today's society, such as capitalist control of scientific breakthroughs and the price of advancement.

Brother-and-sister duo Roan and Judge Gorey were born with mysterious abilities; Roan can summon lethal monsters that take the shape of anything with DNA that they touch, and Judge can create portals into another dimension. A powerful corporation promises their parents that it can remove these dangerous powers, but their true intentions veer into the sinister. Roan eventually escapes captivity to reunite with her family, but her actions initiate a catastrophic string of events that threaten the world.

A breakneck pace makes *Right of Capture* a compelling read. The siblings, their allies, and even their enemies hardly get a moment's respite on the journey to a thrilling, if devastating, conclusion. The action-packed narrative compensates for the ambiguous explanations regarding the source of the siblings' powers. The mystery of whether Roan and Judge are the next stage of evolution or the result of an experiment form the novel's core, and the conundrum's answer may ultimately prove unsatisfying.

Likewise, deep exploration of the individual characters' psyches is not a priority in *Right of Capture*. Instead, the story focuses on the effects caused by personal interests and how small incidents can add up to world-changing events. The lack of deep characterization doesn't serve as a pitfall, however. The intricate weaving of multiple subplots and deft handling of a large cast of characters is quite masterful. The twists and turns, combined with surprising motivations and contradictions, keep the characterization from seeming slight.

At its heart, *Right of Capture* explores the various ways that human weaknesses can be exploited. But when the people involved wield dangerous powers, the shape of that abuse can have terrible repercussions. The ominous conclusion closes the chapter on Roan's immediate conflict with the corporation but sets the stage for further confrontations to come—certain to be the welcome subject of much-anticipated future installments.

VERNIEDA VERGARA (Winter 2017)

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