



Supernatural Beings 1: Hero and the Traitor

Thierry Kouam

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Supernatural Beings 1: Hero and the Traitor is a character-driven urban fantasy in which magical and human forces clash.

In Thierry Kouam's fantastical *Supernatural Beings 1: Hero and the Traitor*, humanity's fate hangs on the actions of two naïve supernatural beings.

The city of Winnipeg exists on the boundary between the human and supernatural world. For centuries, two races of shape-shifting magical beings have hidden from humans, all the while fostering intense hatred. A pair of twins born to the tiger clan shatter the peace, embarking on a mission to wage war and destroy humanity.

But when the twins, Hero and Prince, arrive in Winnipeg, they encounter a human being brimming with potential power. Hero begins to doubt the teachings of his people and feels compelled to protect the human at all costs. He is marked a traitor; the eagle clan races to destroy him and the human, sparking a civil war amid the supernatural, even as they amass to wipe out humans en masse.

Hero and Prince are the central characters, while the mysterious human, Angel, becomes a pivotal factor in both wars. The three characters, though, are underconstructed, and their motivations are not sufficiently teased out. Aside from a smattering of physical details, there is little to differentiate the three from one another. Angel's backstory is interesting but underdeveloped; a sudden reveal in the closing chapters is forced.

Early chapters adopt an engaging fairy tale narration style, but when the twins' journey to the human realm takes over, the story becomes more of a familiar urban fantasy, its focus shifting to a love triangle between Hero, Prince, and Angel.

Awkward phrasing and strange grammatical structures and choices become more of an impediment as the novel continues. Conversations mingle with prose, and the book's run-on sentences span paragraphs. Characters' conversations are rough and cyclical, devolving into repeated questions and answers that impede the book's pace.

Excessive world building bogs the plot down, though elements of it are engaging. The supernatural world has a compelling power structure and mythology: members of the tiger clan can shift into tigers, but also release their souls as a distinct entity. Hints toward themes around morality and blind faith are present, but are overwhelmed by the sheer amount of details.

Though Hero and Prince experience both worlds and connect with a special human being, nothing much has changed by the novel's end: both races are still following misguided teachings, and the humans are oblivious to the massive war that's brewing.

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JOHN M. MURRAY (April 14, 2020)

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