ForeWord Reviews

YOUNG ADULT FICTION

**The Survivors: Point of Origin**
Amanda Havard
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At the end of *The Survivors*, Sadie Matthau had returned to her family and their walled city in Montana, along with the Winters, another clan of immortals. Twenty-eight Survivors had left the enclave and developed a taste for human flesh, and those left behind were preparing for a battle foretold in a prophecy. Sadie was torn between Everett Winter, dashing but bloodthirsty, and human Cole Hardwick, whose simple kindness was as attractive as his preppy ensembles. As *Point of Origin* opens, Sadie is seemingly at odds with everyone. Her best human friend feels lied to (because she has been); Cole legitimately feels rejected; the remaining Survivors blame Sadie for the rogue faction's departure, and the Winters feel disrespected by the devout pacifism of the Survivors. Everett is particularly cranky, knowing he can't turn up in Sadie's bed with human blood on his breath. To try and put things right, Sadie must learn more about the Survivors, including what, if anything, might kill one, knowledge that might prove tempting in the hands of a 142-year-old growing tired of the daily grind.

Amanda Havard has crafted a solid sequel that builds on the ideas set forth in *The Survivors* and expands them in multiple directions. And what ideas! From the shapeshifting lynxes who both help and undermine Sadie's quest, to the class conflict between blood-drinkers and their pacifist counterparts, there's much to mull over besides which guy she'll choose. There are some particularly well-scripted moments that explain a character's powers visually, as when Sadie can pull a received vision from her head, literally, in strands of metallic smoke and then transfer it to someone else's head in a sort of file-share. It's both creepy and fascinating in equal measure. Revelations about the original Survivors that should not be surprising in the least turn out to be head-slappers thanks to Havard's deftly blending of clues into the story and then distracting readers with a new detail or piece of historical trivia. She also weaves big themes (love, death, loyalty, faith, and family) into a supernatural horror story; the action is utterly compelling, but there's much to reflect on, too. Readers who were enticed by the first volume will gobble this one up and probably mark their 2013 calendars with reminders to order volume three. It's that addictive, and, thankfully, also worth the effort.?

*Heather Seggel*