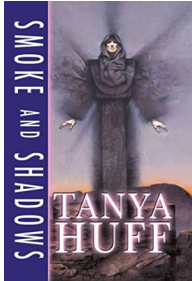




Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians



Smoke and Shadows By Tanya Huff

Discussed September 2005

Discussion Questions

1. *Smoke and Shadows* takes place in a previously established universe with characters that have appeared in other books - Tony and Henry. For those who have read any of Huff's Blood books, did Tanya succeed in moving these characters into a new setting? For those who haven't read the Blood books, were you satisfied with Tony and Henry's introductions and backgrounds? Do you think having read the Blood books enhanced your understanding of Tony and Henry?
2. In the Blood books, Tony is a relatively minor supporting character. Here, he is intended to be the primary hero/character. Did Huff succeed in promoting Tony from supporting player to primary focus? Did Henry's presence help or hinder Tony's role as primary character?
3. How do you think sexuality was handled in *Smoke and Shadows*? Would the book read differently if Tony was straight? Would it be a better book, or worse book, or does his sexuality really matter?
4. What do you think of the writing? How effective was Tanya at making characters three dimensional? Did you like Tony, Henry, and Arra? Why or why not? What about the secondary characters?
5. The same sequence of events happens repeatedly. The heroes hunt a shadow, get it (or not) and repeat the process. How did you find the pacing of the book? Were you on the edge of your seat to see what happened next, or did you think, "here we go again"?
6. This book is an urban fantasy/horror novel. We've read others (including *Good Omens*, *American Gods*, *Blood Price*, and others). How does this compare in its use of setting and pop culture? Did you enjoy the regular references to things like "The X-Files", "Buffy", etc? Did they affect your reading of the book? Did they help or hinder the establishment of time and place? How successfully do you feel that Tanya was at "setting"?
7. Did you find the "filming of a self-acknowledged cheesy syndicated genre TV show" an interesting one? What aspects of this backdrop did you like/not like?
8. Did you like the book? Why or why not? Would you want to read the Blood books? What about any sequels to *Smoke and Shadows*?