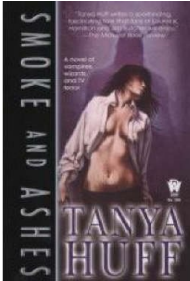




Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians



Smoke and Ashes By Tanya Huff

Characters

- Tony Foster - budding wizard and now TAD on the show
- Leah Burnett - Deamongate / Stuntwoman / Prof. Stuntdriver
- Ryne Cyratane - demon lord - name means "Desire and Destruction"
- Lee Nicholas - second most important actor in Darkest Night
- Henry Fitzroy - Son of Man, Prince of Darkness (Real vampire, okay?)
- Chester Bane - CB - the big man and owner of the production company
- Jack Elson – constable
- Kevin Groves - tabloid journalist
- Mason Reed - lead actor in Darkest night. He's not a vampire but he plays one on TV
- Zev Sero - an ex of Tony's
- Amy - Goth Chick and gate person for CB productions

Discussion Questions

Time: Demonic Convergence near Halloween

Place: Realms near Vancouver

1. This is the third book in the Smoke series where Tony Foster is becoming more and more the developing hero. How does this book compare with the previous two? Did you need to read the first two (or previous one) to understand this one? I.e., does this book stand by itself?
2. Did Huff do a good job at getting you to suspend your disbelief and quickly? Or not at all? I want to hear especially from first time readers.
3. This book has been classified as "Urban Vampire" on some sites I've seen. Do you agree? How would you classify the book?
4. Leah is 3,500 years old. Did it bother you that she didn't have savings? Did anything else bother you about the setting, characters, etc.?
5. The book is rife with references to TV, books, and movies. Does this add or detract? We've had discussions which indicate that sort of thing "dates" a book. In this case, is it a good which or a bad which?

6. This book could be the most playful of the three with all its sarcastic humor, sexual innuendo, and so forth. Do you agree? Was it good for you, too? Were there any "tics" that annoyed you due to their repetition? Did the characters have their own sense of humor, or was it all the author's? If so, did you care?
7. Speaking of sex. There is quite a lot of that going on given it is how Ryne Cyratane gets his energy. He (demon) doesn't do homosex, and can't even see anyone he wouldn't have Leah do. Is this a problem? An advantage to the plot? Is this saying something about the way straight women get their way with men? And what does that say about straight men? What about the scene where Leah almost entraps a married hotel manager but Tony stops her, and a conversation ensues about morality?
8. Speaking of more sexual tension. Lee and Tony. Tony and Henry. Most of the males and Leah. Amy and Jack. Tony and Ryne Cyratane. How are these handled in the story? Is the ogling and distracted desire an added bonus to the storyline or a detriment? Tony and his guys have "issues" but the straights just have uncomplicated sex. What is Huff saying? True in real life? Is there anything telling about Lee and Leah being named phonetically the same? How is GLBT sex handled in the book? Is desire a greater factor in the book than actual sex?
9. What is your favorite sex scene in the book? Why? Was Huff particularly good at one type of sex scene over another? Were they too graphic or tastefully done?
10. Speaking of love interests. Let's. Tony & Lee - does the tension throughout yield a satisfying ending? Why is Tony stuck on having Lee make the decision? Leah & Ryne & whomever straight is nearby. Ryne is "a lover not a fighter" and she is his handmaiden; he protects her with the demongate and gets energy from her sexual escapades as she gets power over men, besides being immortal. A good trade?
11. How do you feel about having the whole plot turn around a jilted girlfriend, Sye McKaseeh, and her desire for power and revenge? What about the other exes in the story? Do they have equal impact?
12. How'd you like them demons? Did the fact that they took place more or less within the context of the television show make them seem more real? Were they the only demons in the story?
13. Did this book make it on plot or character or setting? Was it well plotted? Were there any loose ends? Did the hero, Tony, change in the course of the book? Were there other heroes, and did other characters change? Were there any that did not? What about character parallels? Leah and Amy, Tony and Lee? CB and Henry? Others?
14. It's Halloween; of course there are 13 questions. And now for the obligatory Q; Why or why not? Did the discussion today change your mind? Will there be a sequel?