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Collector #1: City in Embers

Natalie Hatch

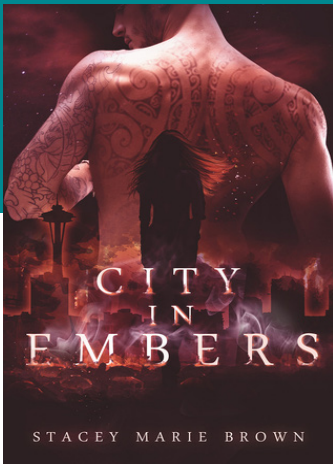
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Book Review

Collector #1: City in Embers

Author

Stacey Marie Brown

Illustrator

Reviewer

Natalie Hatch

Rating

Excellent

Level

Young Adult

Pages

458

Year

2015

Publisher

Twisted Fairy Publishing

ISBN

9781515954439

Foster homes are the pits. It's a tough life filled with tough choices, growing up fast, and fighting to survive. Fighting is one of the few things Zoey understands. Zoey has one thing to her advantage: she was born with the ability to see fae. Because of this, she is recruited by the Department of Molecular Genetics (DMG) to help protect the world from magical threats. She becomes a Collector and falls in love with Daniel, her partner at DMG. During a mission, they met a fae called Ryker, someone with no qualms about killing. Zoey is determined to protect her human world, but everything in her life changes when she finds herself becoming fae and having to fight to not remain her company's next experiment.

Stacey Marie Brown does a great job of capturing a world of realistic city life, hard foster realities, and magic all in one messy ball. She tackles hard subjects such as abuse, self-image issues, fighting, ethical choices, death, and weighing the importance of personal interests versus keeping moral codes. *City in Embers* is definitely not a fluffy or candy-read type of book. But Brown does a good job of tying things together, explaining motives and mindsets, and not idolizing or presenting perfect or beautiful characters. Her characters have beauty and depth because of their flaws and weaknesses. Brown captures the sense of urgency during chaos, stress, intrigue, and confusion when a world is turned upside-down, and the deep-felt betrayal of self and others for sometimes believing in things that are too good to be true.

*Contains severe sexual content and severe violence