



Of Scions and Men

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Geopolitical babysitting while arresting preternatural killers, it's just the daily grind for Scion Rowan Brady. Brash and sarcastic, Rowan has sold her life, her career and her very blood to the controlling paranormal ruling class of America, all to make sure her kid brother can eat. Now she uses her powers as a scion to kick the ass of any preternatural creature idiotic enough to break the rules and prey upon humanity without a license. All it costs her is her freedom and a pint or two per week to her new Master.

But juggling her job and duties becomes even tougher when she is tasked with keeping a contingency of diplomats from Canada from getting gnawed on. However, negotiations for an International Blood Exchange are interrupted when bodies start showing up.

Now Rowan must rely on her talent and wit to defend the society she despises to save the lives she's sworn to protect. But as she stumbles into the truth, she chances becoming a target of not only these killers, but of her own government. With shifters, ghosts, vampires and psychics all watching her, can she stop the killings before she is silenced?

Of Scions and Men Details

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Author : Courtney Sloan

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From Reader Review Of Scions and Men for online ebook

Yellagirlgc says

I would like to thank NetGalley and the publisher for allowing me to read this book in exchange for an honest review.

I just finished the book and wish there was a sequel to read! Devon and Rowan were such likable people. There were no parts of the book where I was bored or ready to read something instead of finishing it. This is a great start to a series I hope continues to be as good or better than this first book. Courtney Sloan will be an author I read in the future.

Vampires, scions & shifters are in the book. There's mystery, humor & love. It has it all. I'll be telling friends and family to read this.

Sh3lly (grumpybookgrrrl.com) says

I have been looking forward to reading this, but unfortunately the main character made me too ragey to finish it. **DNF 29%**. This is a dystopian vampire urban fantasy. Vampires have taken control and humans must take vaccinations of vampire blood to stay healthy and "donate" blood quarterly.

There are different classes of people and vampires. The elite, the working class, the poor, and those operating in the underworld/black market. Rowan is a scion to a master vampire and works for an investigative agency, who works to prevent rogue vampires from taking blood illegally.

I liked that the vampires could "feed" their abilities to their scions so they could become really strong, heal, and have acute senses. There were several things to like about this and that kept my interest. I could not stand the protagonist, though.

She is supposed to be strong and independent and only **VERY, super-duper ultra-to-the-max** grudgingly agreed to be a scion in the first place so her younger brother would be taken care of. We are never allowed to forget that Rowan does NOT want to be a scion so much that she refuses to allow her vampire employer to even dull the pain as he drinks from her. No, she is soooooooooooooooooooooo stubborn that she would rather be in extreme pain just to prove a point.

It's just not even logical. I understand she doesn't want him to "enthrall" her or have a romantic relationship with him, but let's not be a DUMB-ASS about it. Then, she acts like a FOOL in front of the most powerful vampire... in the world. And gets in trouble and hurt. *eye roll* It's TSTL category.

I don't have any sympathy for her and can't relate to her AT ALL. She is not likable. We know the vampire only picked her because he got into some trouble and couldn't pick someone better! haha. I don't know what he sees in her. I would have tossed her back and picked someone even lower down the rung.

This really had potential, but with such an annoying lead character, I'm calling it quits.

Previous post:

Isis says

would like to thank Curiosity Quills Press for an e-ARC of this book to review. Though I received this e-book for free, that has no impact upon the honesty of my review.

Goodreads Teaser: Geopolitical babysitting while arresting preternatural killers, it's just the daily grind for Scion Rowan Brady. Brash and sarcastic, Rowan has sold her life, her career and her very blood to the controlling paranormal ruling class of America, all to make sure her kid brother can eat. Now she uses her powers as a scion to kick the ass of any preternatural creature idiotic enough to break the rules and prey upon humanity without a license. All it costs her is her freedom and a pint or two per week to her new Master.

But juggling her job and duties becomes even tougher when she is tasked with keeping a contingency of diplomats from Canada from getting gnawed on. However, negotiations for an International Blood Exchange are interrupted when bodies start showing up. Now Rowan must rely on her talent and wit to defend the society she despises to save the lives she's sworn to protect. But as she stumbles into the truth, she chances becoming a target of not only these killers, but of her own government. With shifters, ghosts, vampires and psychics all watching her, can she stop the killings before she is silenced?

I stumbled a bit at the beginning, as the story launched into full swing with no real explanations. Obviously that eventually smooths out as the details start to click into place with the arc of the story, creating a more or less cohesive tale. And though the start could use some smoothing out, the overall story is well worth the initial confusion.

Rowan is an engaging and entertaining main protagonist, with a heart of gold for those that survive the tests to make it into her inner circle. A rather exclusive group, but one which has the potential for growth. Her prickly, sarcastic public persona hides a warm, supremely protective devotion to her much younger brother, Will. That devotion drives every decision she's made since the loss of their parents; a loss that left the two alone and adrift in a hostile world. To that end she took a job she hates, but one that provides the safety she wants for Will; safety she could never have supplied otherwise.

Her employer Devon is one of the ruling class, a vampire. Though she is his scion she has very little knowledge about him. He remains a mystery throughout the story, with small tidbits about who he is and how he got to where he is being dropped in every so often. But one thing is crystal clear, his feelings for Rowan. Though he hides them from her those around him are aware of them. In fact Rowan would be if only she took the time to look. But Devon is more of a supporting character for most of this book, rising to the forefront on occasion, then fading into the background again.

While this story has several components common to books of this nature, Ms. Sloan has managed to keep this her story. Her voice is distinct and she never seems to fall back into the trap of playing off things that have already been done. At least not without adding her own stamp to those segments. This opening act is easily strong enough to have left me wanting more. I'm curious to see how her writing matures as the story develops further.

Diane says

Received a complimentary copy to read and review. It was a good read. I couldn't put it down. I like the characters and world that Courtney has created. It has some great twists and turns. Readers will be drawn into the story from the first page. I look forward to reading more of Courtney's books.

Jeanny says

Author:

Courtney Sloan is a new to me author, making *Of Scions & Men* my first experience with her writing.

Genre:

UF/Distopian

Editing:

Flawless.

Cover Art:

Not only is the cover art gorgeous it's also accurate.

1st POV - Rowan

Romance:

None, although the potential for future romance does exist.

World:

Distopian, USA

After a massive human war the paranormal population is "out of the closet". Every war has it's casualties & in this case humanity paid the price. North America is segregated from the rest of the world, travel is strictly monitored, currency has changed, healthcare, living conditions, employment opportunities, & most important the political arena was altered. This book is set in a world Vampires are the governing body.

My thoughts:

Tight plot, excellent character development, the author did a fantastic job. The story was action packed, the world easily imagined, the political aspects intriguing. Rowan's priorities, hardships, thoughts, morals, & reality were easily relatable. Rowan has depth & so does the supporting cast. This cast & world has a massive amount of potential. I'm hopeful *Of Scions & Men* is the start of a series bc I want to continue to play in Courtney Sloan's world. Update: It is a series: *The Scions Of Wrath #2*.

Will I continue the series?

Yes, Rowan has room for growth & I want to read all about her character development, how she changes, how it impacts who she is, her actions & her world. I'm also interested in the scion bond & Devon.

Recommendation:

I'd recommend this book to fans of UF, vampires, shifters, & dystopian worlds. If you're tired of one woman armies who never fail, are overly bitchy, or TSTL pick this book up. It's a welcomed change.

Rating:

***** 5 stars

Sophia says

I love vampire stories, but I've read many and it's hard for me to find a refreshing take on them. Not only did this gem of a story offer me just such a story, but it included a fantastic cast of characters and a gritty post-apocalyptic urban fantasy plot that captivated me from beginning to in.

The story opens with vampire scion, Rowan Brady, going about her day job policing the prets (preternaturals) by hauling in a vamp who abused the laws by taking blood from an unlicensed source- namely small children- making her feel especially glad to get one more bit of scum off the dangerous streets of post-reclamation Chicago.

Rowan is a survivor and has done what she had to do to keep her and her little brother alive. Humans look down on her choice to become the scion of a vampire in exchange for basic needs and a home, but her brother is worth it and it doesn't hurt to finally not be starving and living on the edge all the time. She might get irritated with having Devon constantly in her head and to be at his beck and call for blood and social events, but he's not a bad sort. He allows her more freedoms and puts up with her attitude more than most would. At least her status allows her to do a job that fulfills her unlike some scions who are vampire pets and more.

Things start to get interesting when a vampire and her scion from Canada arrive looking to convince America about a radical change in the way the blood laws are writing, gruesome serial killings start happening and Rowan with her partner must investigate, and a person from Rowan's past shows up with a hidden agenda. And if that wasn't exciting enough, Rowan and the others have managed to catch the dangerous eye of the Vampire King. At some point, she might have to squeeze in some time for sleep.

Alright, so this was a book that grabbed me from the beginning and kept me right there through the whole thing. The reader is slowly trickled the details of this darker, grittier world where humans discover that the monsters are real and now they're in charge. Blood is the new big commodity and a loaf of bread can cost the price of a car before the Reclamation (when vampires ended the last world war when humans had nearly annihilated their own race). The big wars have decimated the world and returned the outer extremes of the country into the wilds and the only protection and help is in a few heartland cities. Life is hard and daily survival is the goal.

The blend of dystopian and urban fantasy with vampires, shifters, mediums, ghosts, and the human hybrid, Scions makes for an action plot that is balanced with the character growth and development of the sole narrator and heroine of the story, Rowan Brady. It paces out with a variety of fast and pulse-pounding scenes and some steady ones. There is a lot going on and at first the reader has little idea who is who, what is what, and what is going on. But this wasn't a bad sort of confusion. I loved slowly having this story unwrap the details and explain itself as it went.

Rowan is rough and snarky and hides as much of herself as she can. Even in the end, I had a sense that there

is more to come as she is a deep character. Becoming a scion is considered by most humans to be the act of selling herself. Her fiancé trashed her in her community and then turned his back on her. The human police and others she encounters through her job give her a hard time as well so now she hides the hurt behind a wall.

She has a conflicted relationship with the vampire, Devon, she is bonded with. He wants more than she is willing to give, but surprisingly he doesn't force her to cross important lines she has drawn. He irritates her most of the time except that he is also a generous and warm person who protects and makes her and her brother's life easier because he cares. As the reader, I understood more about Devon than Rowan did and he is also another one with more reveals to come, I think.

When her ex returns with a tantalizing offer, the confusion and conflict inside grow. He seems to have had a change of heart, but she is not oblivious to the fact that he has also changed a lot.

And then there's her investigation which provides a suspense element to the plot. There is a serial killer loose and the investigation is showing that there is a tie-in with the very secret scion-making process that has the vampire hierarchy wanting the case solved and are pressuring Rowan, Devon, and their Canadian counterparts to tidy things up quickly. Rowan's policing partner, Lyle, a bird shifter, is a bright and shining note whenever he's about and they make a good team with their own style of bond like two battle buddies share.

The book's story arc is tied up with a nail-biting climax scene, but I was excited to see where the series seems to be headed. Some interesting things came out at the end and already there are new tantalizing mysteries to ponder while I wait for the next installment.

Urban Fantasy and dystopian lovers who like gritty, absorbing plots and tough yet engaging characters should snag this one for a lot of book loving.

My thanks to Curiosity Quills Press for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for an honest review.

Gwen says

Clearly opinion is divided over this book, but not being one to follow the mainstream and always on the lookout for something new and fresh, I am sorry to say but I loved the book.

If you are looking for a book that does not feature insta love, solves the eternal problem of naked shifters, includes vampire bonds and dismembered bodies, all set in a dystopian world, well here is the book for you.

But and here's the but

"If you like Piña Coladas, getting caught in the rain
If you're not into yoga, if you have half a brain
If you like making love at midnight in the dunes on the cape
I'm the love that you've looked for write to me and escape"
Jimmy Buffett - If You Like Pina Coladas.....

Then this is not the book for you, it's not romantic, at least not yet, but for me....

Meigan says

3.5. Review to come.

Marjolein says

3.5 Stars

Read all my reviews on <http://urlphantomhive.booklikes.com>

After tragedy strikes, it is time for the Vampires to reveal their true nature and in fact they end up governing over the humans, who are forced to donate blood for the vampires to drink. In addition, important vampires can get a Scion, which is like a special blood donor who in return can tap from the vampire's power through a psychic link. Main character Rowan, both Scion and on the lookout for rogue vampires, will do what it takes to protect her little brother from harm.

Most of the time I really enjoyed the novel. I quite liked the scion thing, as it was at least trying to keep the vampires slightly more original, which must be a near impossible job with all the vampire novels out there. However, it couldn't always keep my interest and besides the occasional infodump I also thought it was rather slow at times. Although Rowan is a conflicted and mostly interesting character, she sometimes takes her sarcasm and independence to a level where it becomes more or less annoying.

I've read this is the first book in a new series, and I hope this is indeed true, as the world was quite interesting and there are certainly some questions left to be answered.

Thanks to the publisher for providing me with a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review!

Marianne says

4.75 stars. With the potential to become a favorite series.

~A-Z reading challenge; letter O~

Badseedgirl says

I, as a reader, often wonder if it is harder to create an entirely new world like in a fantasy novel or a world just like today's but with a few crucial changes as Courtney Sloan does in Of Scions and Men? Whichever is harder, establishing a world in the first novel in a series is always a challenge. Mrs. Sloan does an admirable job of creating a "realistic" world in this novel. You know, as realistic as a world where vampires are the ruling faction in North American and Europe at least.

There was a lot to admire about this novel. As I said the world building is quite good, and the characters in general react in ways one would expect in the environment they were placed in by the author. In a place where blood is the coin of the realm, it is entirely conceivable that humans would enter into an agreement with the vampires, but still feel the bitterness, the main character Rowan Brady, feels in committing herself because she had no other choice.

The story is engaging, and the characters are realistic. At first, I was a tad annoyed by the main character's attitude towards the vampire she is scion to, but the more of her story I read the more I realized, that although she made a choice to become a scion, it was not because she truly felt it was her place. I mean how many of us have taken a job we did not want, just because we had to have income. Ok so her decision was pretty permanent as far as jobs go, I mean once you have bonded with a vampire, it's not as if you could just go on Jobfinder and look for something different. But to me that makes her frustration all the more realistic, she took a job that is "for life" because she felt she had no other choice. Who wouldn't be bitter by those circumstances?

Although there is no sex in this first book, there is a strong undercurrent of sexual tension running throughout the story. But if a brilliant twist, the tension is between Rowan and several characters. Because there is no resolution between any of the characters, sexual speaking, the author has left herself wide open on where she wants to go with this character.

This openness is really my one complaint about this novel. By the end of this first novel, there are so many paths Courtney Sloan could take for her next book it is most frustrating as a reader. Will the author pursue the romance angle, the human uprising, the supernatural LGBT community, the geopolitical vampire agenda? All these choices lead to a double edge sword. In a first novel, it is ok to throw so much at the reader, this is a way to show all the turmoil in this society. But if it continues in future books, the author runs the risk of becoming to "sloppy" with the storyline. I look forward to seeing how Ms. Sloan works through this in future novels.

I would like to thank NetGalley and Curiosity Quills Press for the ARC copy of this novel, given for an honest review.

Jay says

DNF

I feel terrible for not finishing Of Scions and Men because:

- 1) It's the author's debut novel and I'm the first person not to give it a positive review (I'm sorry! Please don't play darts with my picture)
- 2) The people at Curiosity Quills Press are absolute sweethearts

It's not a **bad** book - I actually enjoyed quite a lot of it. I just started to lose interest in the story until I never found myself in the mood to pick it up again.

When I started reading, it was a little hard to get into: there were occasional info dumps and it was dangerously teetering on the edge of becoming my ultimate nemesis, the dreaded vampire romance.

"Stay close to me and, for once, try not to be cute"

"If you play with your dress anymore, I don't think my staff will be able to keep their minds on their work"

"You are a vision, cherie."

I blushed.

I also didn't really like Rowan that much. The problem was that everything I *did* like about her was taken too far.

I liked her sarcasm, but she was downright mean at times.

I liked her independence, but then it turned her into a lone wolf.

I liked how much she cared about her little brother, but it started to become annoying as she was borderline obsessed.

I liked how headstrong she was, but it often made her careless and stupid.

Overall, the writing was good, the characters were engaging and the story was unique, but it just wasn't for me really.

Thank you NetGalley for this ARC and congratulation to the author on getting published!

Shelley says

Source Publisher

Genre Urban Fantasy

Rating 3.0

My Thoughts

Key Characters: Rowan Brady, Devon Shuvalov, Nadia Gavrilova, and Carson Holt

Setting: Chicago post Reclamation America

Of Scions and Men is the first installment in author Courtney Sloan's American Scion series. Protagonist Rowan Brady works for an organization called DEC (Department of Energy Conservation). The DEC ensures compliance by vampires and humans. Rowan is what is called a Blood Theft specialist. She is the person who gets to run down vampires who abuse their power and take blood from unsuspecting humans. In

this world, the vampires are the saviors of most of the known world, therefore, they get to be leaders without worrying about silly things like voting primaries.

*Full Review Posting @ Gizmos Reviews 03/19/2016 - Link to Follow

Published February 22nd 2016 by Curiosity Quills Press

Yzabel Ginsberg says

[I received a copy of this book through NetGalley, in exchange for an honest review.]

First volume of what seems to be an interesting series. Not the best urban fantasy novel I've ever read, sure, but it has political hooks that could very well lead to a few big bangs in the future.

When the world went to the dogs, vampires revealed themselves and stepped in to keep the cattle, sorry, the humans in check—after all, there's no point in letting your bloodbags kill each other with mass-destruction weapons. Decades later, in the aftermath of that explosive situation, Earth is pretty much governed by said vampires, some of them using more human employees than others, but all determined to keep their own just as much in check. Well, at least in some parts of the world, including the USA, where the DEC (Department of Energy Conservation) sends people patrolling the streets in order to stop rogue vampires from feeding illegally and killing their preys.

Rowan Brady is one such agents, partnered with shapeshifter Lyle, and also the scion of vampire Devon: a human bonded to a vampire, able to use part of his powers, but also never, ever truly alone in her mind anymore. A sure recipe for a clusterfuck, especially since a lot of "purely human" people tend to view scions as blood whores, a lot of scions play the part as well, and Rowan does her best not to become a walking cliché. All for the sake of her little brother Will, after their parents' sudden death in an accident left them orphaned, and Rowan unable to take part in the Cup (a competition that, depending on her final rank, would have opened her a lot of doors... and conversely).

In general, I quite liked the relationships between Rowan and the male characters. Rowan/Devon bordered more than once on the vampire romance-type relationship, but it never become the infuriating kind of romance that makes me roll my eyes. Devon's a pretty decent guy, all things considered (even though his "cherie" speech mannerism was annoying, I guess the French in me just finds this a bit silly), playing the social and power-related role that a lot of vampires thrive in, however he never veered into the territory of "domineering alpha-male who abuses his partner/servant". And when he tries to play white knight and protect his scion by telling her to "stay at home for your own good"? He ends up needing her anyway, and she ends up kicking ass anyway. Then there's the werewolf pack leader and a fellow DEC agent: a positive alpha male, maintaining his position through benevolence and thought-out decisions, and not strutting around being all "me big strong violent male, me is your boss, female". Yeah, I am rather tired and jaded when it comes to male characters acting all over the place in very macho ways (or the "I'm dark and dangerous and I'm seducing you through coercion and being rough" type).

On the downside : some info-dumping, and a tendency on Rowan's part to be slightly exaggerated (too sarcastic and mean at times, too obsessed, too bent on doing things absolutely alone even if it meant running into trouble). Not many other female characters in there either, apart from Nadia who, so there's a risk of having a more typical woman-surrounded-with-male format in later books. I was also less satisfied when it

came to Lyle, because I think there's a lot more to him than just "flamboyant gay blue jay shifter"—hopefully there'll be more in the next book ! His relationship with Rowan is sweet, in a "best friend/I have your back" way, and it'd be great to see him more developed: where did he find the strength to make his coming out in a society like his, did anything happen in the past that threatened him or, on the contrary, made him stronger and able to stand up to his peers ? Etc. Finally, I couldn't care less about Curtis. I can only hope he'll remain a secondary character, and that he won't end up being part of some dreaded love polygon.

Conclusion : 3 stars. I found myself wanting to keep reading, and interested enough in the world and its characters. There's real potential for intrigue, in more political ways than is usually found in urban fantasy. Some of the foundations behind that world, though, are a bit flimsy (at some point you need to exert suspension of disbelief and focus on the "now" rather than the "then" and "why"... but I've seen worse), and it could all just as well devolve into cookie-cutter UF. I'll keep an eye on this series, even if I won't buy it.

Janis Hill says

I would like to thank Curiosity Quills Press for a free ARC of this book in exchange for an open and honest review.

This book was great! Though I will freely admit at first I groaned and thought I was reading a 'Hollows wannabe'. I soon shut myself up, apologised profusely for being such an idiot for assuming such a thing and got on with enjoying the story. It is NOT a 'Hollows wannabe' AT ALL! Yes there are some minor similarities... but you could say that about any supernatural urban fantasy that has vampires, shifters (were people) and the like in them. In some ways, it was better than the Hollows as it's a new series, first off and... time for me and I do apologise to Ms Harrison and her Hollows for saying this... BETTER! More believable and easier to get into, to run with.

Okay, so now I have possibly insulted two excellent authors, let's try and skip past that and get on with how great this book is.

'Of Scions and Men' is a really good spin on the whole vamp/ scion roles often shown in books these days. That in itself was unique. And – yay!!! – the vampires didn't sparkle! They were seen as what they were by those who looked at them in different lights. Yeah, that was easy to follow, right? Basically the whole idea of the lesser of two evils... with a supernatural twist really came into play with this book.

The main character was likable, you got to know her and her background well as the book progressed – rather than having all dumped on you to start with, or suddenly thrown at you as to why she is the way she is as a poorly planned plot twist near the end. No, Ms Sloan handled the whole character development very well and kept me interested into the wee hours with my 'One more chapter' mantra.

There were the odd typo and grammatical glitches, but this was an ARC and so they are easily excused. My work (and reviews) are full of them so cannot judge! I will admit to sometimes getting a little lost in the fight scenes as the terminology used confused me. It was probably the correct and proper phrases used... but not being a fight guru I almost skimmed those sections as they got a little too technical for me. Not a big thing, just a reader thing. As in, the fault lay with the reader, not the book.

Would I recommend this book to others? Yes I would. In fact, I already have been. Anyone I know who has read 'The Hollows' series by Kim Harrison has had me tell them to grab this book and have a read as it's

great.

Would I buy this book for myself? Yes I would. In fact, I have a MAJOR book hangover from it and really, REALLY want to see how this series is going to progress and I can't wait to read the next book. Yes, I will be making big moony eyes at Ms Sloan and Curiosity Quills Press in the hopes I can be a reviewer for the next book too.

In summary: Loved it, read it in like 3 days and want more NOW! A brilliant, refreshing and thoroughly enjoyable new supernatural urban fantasy series and something lovers of this genre should go and buy TODAY! Buy it now, thank me later. ;-)
