

The Zygan Emprise: Renegades, Redemption, Rebirth

Y S Pascal

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A dynamic duo face a series of evolving challenges while working undercover to avert alien attacks in the heartwarming science fiction novel The Zygan Emprise.

In Y. S. Pascal's futuristic science fiction novel *The Zygan Emprise*, a young intelligence agent fights for her family and unearths the secrets of a powerful space coalition.

Shiloh and her work partner Spud moonlight as Hollywood stunt actors, but that is only a cover for their true identities. They are agents for the Zygan Federation, an alliance of intelligent beings under the direction of the Omega Archon. In these roles, Shiloh and Spud protect Zygfed and its territories from alien attacks.

The book's three parts have differing foci, though all circle themes of family unity and loyalty. First, Shiloh and Spud confront a powerful political leader who has plans to unlock the secrets of a new dimension regardless of the risk it poses to other Zygfed beings. Next, they undertake a dangerous rescue mission and Shiloh uncovers mysteries that throw her loyalties into question. Lastly, the duo face pressure to prevent an apocalypse, grappling with betrayal in their inner circle.

Despite its three-part split, the text is cohesive and satisfying, with surprises arising throughout. Shiloh and Spud begin the trilogy working undercover to overthrow Theodore, who plans to reach an inaccessible dimension in the pursuit of ultimate power, then to rescue Shiloh's brother who has become entrapped in Theodore's plan; later, they collaborate with Theodore in a desperate campaign to fix the damage to the historical timeline sustained during their rescue mission. In the course of each development, Shiloh discovers pieces of truth about her family, including about her brother, John, whose good intentions to discover more about the fifth dimension endanger everyone; about her parents and their mysterious absence; and about her own origins. Her personal transformation is painful, taking her from a lost teenager whose siblings rely on her to a resilient fighter with a new understanding of unconditional love, having learned "We do what we can. And that is all."

Powerful relationships are also highlighted via Shiloh's connection with Spud. He's a playful foil to her seriousness, as where he recites textbook information to challenge her. He also brings out Shiloh's gregariousness and sarcasm, as where she tells him "You shouldn't overfill that attic in your head, anyway. Or mine." The comic relief of their interactions also helps to balance out the treachery they encounter in political leaders.

Further, the duo's ability to overcome challenges together, as when Shiloh's time travel puts Spud's brother at risk, shows how unbreakable their bond is. Though Shiloh and Spud are not related by blood, they choose to be each other's family and to show unconditional love to one another. The epilogue shifts focus from them to a mother-daughter pair but continues with the book's overarching themes of resilience via family love.

The Zygan Emprise is a dynamic science fiction novel in which a chosen-family duo overthrows a political tyrant, rescues their family members, and uncovers secrets about another dimension.

KIRIANA MCAFFEE (December 2, 2024)

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