



## Perception

*Heather Cashman*

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Your perception will sharpen once you see through a tiger's eyes. More than five hundred years after the apocalypse, the survivors of off-grid genetic experimentation have refined their mixed DNA to the point that humans and their animal counterparts share physical and mental links. Varying species have divided into districts, living in a tenuous peace under the President of Calem. Ardana and her tiger ingenium Rijan leave their life of exile and abuse in the Outskirts, setting out with their twin brothers to redeem themselves and become citizens of the Center. But shedding their past isn't as easy as they had hoped. When the system that shunned them becomes embroiled in political conflict and treachery, their unique abilities and experiences from the Outskirts make them invaluable to every faction. The runaways become pawns to friends as well as enemies, and with every step it becomes more difficult to tell which is which.

## Perception Details

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Author : Heather Cashman

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## From Reader Review Perception for online ebook

### D.H. Nevins says

I don't often read YA, but this book was a really nice surprise. The images of this dystopian society are lush and vivid, and the characters within it are as believable as they are likable. I was swept away by the brisk pacing from the very first page, and enjoyed every minute of entertainment that this book provided. I imagine that this is one of those rare books that will draw me back for a re-read in the future—especially before I get my hands on the sequel.

Not only was *Perception* an enjoyable read, the story raises some interesting questions, and had me thinking about the concept of freedom as an idea that we might all perceive differently.

This was a solid read and was a great way to spend a few afternoons.

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### William Johnson says

Interesting Urban Dystopia setting where humans are able to communicate directly with their own animal "Ingenium". Goes a little further in the trait of "The Golden Compass" Deamons and divides it into individual societies based on their companions. "Perception" world built a very interesting setting that will have a couple novels following in it's paw prints. Heather Cashman is a wonderful story teller who covers politics, growing up, first love, and how far someone will go to do what's right in this novel. I recommend this young adult fantasy novel.

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### Bethany says

*Note: full review with quotes, giveaway, and a link to a Q&A with Heather Cashman is here.*

Do you ever wonder what it would be like to see yourself through another's eyes, or to see the world from a perspective other than your own?

This book simply worked for me. I'm not sure how else to say it. I was initially hooked by the dystopian world and the concept of the ingenium – animal-human pairs with mental links – but those elements quickly became a beautiful, vivid background for some of the most interesting characters I've read in a long, long time.

Ardana – or Ana, as her twin brother Kade calls her – is a fascinating heroine, a wonderfully complex blend of strong and vulnerable, jaded and innocent. Her childhood was not happy or easy, and she is convincingly scarred from the hardships she's endured. Despite being trapped – by her connection to her twin brother, Kade, by the needs of her ingenium, Rijan, and by the politics of her world – Ana is not a victim. She fights for what she wants, for those she loves, and – this is what made me love her – she fights to overcome her own fears, to heal her scars.

There are other fascinating characters as well, but my favorite by far is Kliax, who is in his own way just as gritty and complicated as Ana.

He's sexy and confident, and entirely used to getting his own way...he's also got that sexiest of qualities that I love, love, love in a hero: self-control. A man who puts his own needs on hold because he cares about somebody else's feelings wins me over every time. The chemistry between Ana and Kliax is amazing...and I don't just mean physical attraction, although there is that. This is the real thing, the give-and-take, push-and-pull of two people who test one another's boundaries and change the way the other views reality. (Did I mention they have chemistry?)

The various mental links between ingenium and humans add fascinating layers of conflict to the story, and also give a depth to the other characters that you don't often find in first-person narrative. Rijan and Khan, the ingenium tigers of Ana and Kliax, have their own opinions and arguments, and impact the choices that the humans make. I love how Ana's views and opinions are constantly shifting and changing when she sees things through their eyes. It not only makes the story fascinating, but it's a powerful reminder that truth is defined by perception, and that as our perception of something changes, so does our understanding of what truth is.

Perception is full of action, romance, intrigue, adventure, and heartbreak, all unfolding in a colorful dystopian world filled with complicated and engaging characters. I'd recommend it unreservedly to older teens and thinking adults everywhere.

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### **Liza says**

\*\* See more of my reviews at my blog Book Crook Liza \*\*

Oh my God. This was an AMAZING read! Thank you so much to the author for gifting this to me through Random Acts of Kindness! I am in freakin' love with this book! Seriously, this has to be hands down one of the best books I've read this year. I was a little skeptical about whether or not I'd like Perception to be completely honest. I wasn't sure it was something that I'd like, but after reading BJ's review at Dark Side of the Covers, I was sure I had to at least try it, because I trusted her good review on it and I'm so happy I did.

The Good Reads summary summarizes the basic premise of this novel well. Perception did start out a little confusing for me, but I caught on rather quickly. This novel is a mix of science fiction, dystopian and like another reviewer said, did feel a little like high fantasy.

The idea of ingeniums was very fascinating - to be able to communicate telepathically with an animal companion - the advantages and disadvantages it involved. The link between a person and their ingenium is very strong and ties them together for life. Ardana's tiger ingenium Rijan was such a beautiful character. She's wise and loving and their emotional connection made the book that much better.

The main character Ardana was the perfectly flawed heroine. I always get annoyed with main characters at one point or another, but I didn't once feel that with Ardana. She made mistakes, she wasn't perfect, but she grew on me very quickly and I rooted for her throughout the book. She's truly a kick-ass girl.

The love story was wonderful. It wasn't rushed, it was slow-moving, but it felt much more real for it. Ardana

has some major issues to contend with and Kliax is patient and caring. He's also a total stud.

And I'm honestly just speechless! I really, really, really, really recommend this book. If I could give this book 5967856739874739872985 stars, I would. And it's only \$2.99 for the kindle (and nook) edition! Definitely a must read!

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### **Peggy says**

Review posted to Pawning Through Books on 11/14/11

This is one of the most unique dystopians I have read to date. Instead of being written in chapters it is written more like a diary. Each section opens with Ardana's location, the date, and time of day. When I first started reading it, it took me a little while to get used to the Cashman's writing style. However, once I read a few sections of the book I was used to it and got into the story.

This is one of those books that you have to read the blurb before you read the book. If not, you might be a little lost as to how the animals and humans are connected. The humans and their animals are linked together through thought and emotions. What one sees, feels, or thinks the other does as well. They are both mutually dependent on each other. I loved this unique aspect of the story. This aspect of the story allows the reader to see what is happening in multiple points of view. Though it is told in Ardana's point of view, she is able to convey what the others experience.

There is enough action and twists in the plot to keep the reader interested and wondering what is going to happen next. I was continually trying to figure out if certain characters were actually on Ardana & Rijan's side or if they were trying to destroy their plans of becoming citizens.

The one thing I wish there was a bit more of in the story was Calem's history. What happened to our world to cause it to be destroyed? How did the genetic experimentation come about? Why is Calem divided into districts by the people's ingenium? Is there a reason why some people have certain ingenium?

Overall, I really enjoyed Perception and believe that anyone that likes a good dystopian will too. Though it reads a bit more like a sci-fi book, I feel that it is a solid novel that will appeal to many readers that enjoy a good YA book. I am looking forward to finding out what happens next to Ardana, Rijan, and the others.

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### **Tammy says**

Heather Cashman has created a series that will satisfy the Fantasy and Dystopian lover in you! It did in me without doubt.

Here is the book summary: *Your perception will sharpen once you see through a tiger's eyes.*  
*More than five hundred years after the apocalypse, the survivors of off-grid genetic experimentation have refined their mixed DNA to the point that humans and their animal counterparts share physical and mental links. Varying species have divided into districts, living in a tenuous peace under the President of Calem. Ardana and her tiger ingenium Rijan leave their life of exile and abuse in the Outskirts, setting out with their twin brothers to redeem themselves and become citizens of the Center. But shedding their past isn't as easy as they had hoped. When the system that shunned them becomes embroiled in political conflict and*

*treachery, their unique abilities and experiences from the Outskirts make them invaluable to every faction. The runaways become pawns to friends as well as enemies, and with every step it becomes more difficult to tell which is which.*

This book is smarter than your average YA and at first is a bit confusing. There is a lot of information to process at first but Heather Cashman rewards us for the effort. Soon into the story you begin to grasp this new world she has created, lush scenery and complex personalities that capture your mind as well as the over-all political climate that has developed in the five-hundred years since the genetic manipulation of their ancestors.

The empathic link a brother and sister share with their tiger counterparts is a joy to experience. The journey these four have to make in order to secure a better future for themselves is made richer for it. Experiencing the environment through the eyes of human and tiger, brother and sister was a great addition to the story. In the person of Ardana, you learn of her struggle to avoid commitment of any kind outside of her tiger and brother. The abuse and neglect she suffered growing up in the outskirts have caused her to devote herself in the search for true freedom and any type of commitment to another would destroy that dream.

Her brother Kade is all too aware of Ardana's struggle but has an issue all his own. Ardana believes Kade is destined to become a great leader in Calem but Kade does not believe he can be great.

I think the underlying message of Perception is perception, (lol). How do we see ourselves? How do others see us? Which is real?

I think most readers will enjoy this book and I highly recommend it to lovers of Fantasy!

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### **Dani says**

3.5 / 5 stars

#### **Is complete freedom attainable? Or is it all a matter of perception?**

Typically I summarize the books I review myself, but Perception's official blurb describes the book so perfectly that I don't think there's anything I could do to improve upon it. So here you have it, straight from Goodreads:

*Your perception will sharpen once you see through a tiger's eyes.*

*More than five hundred years after the apocalypse, the survivors of off-grid genetic experimentation have refined their mixed DNA to the point that humans and their animal counterparts share physical and mental links. Varying species have divided into districts, living in a tenuous peace under the President of Calem.*

*Ardana and her tiger ingenium Rijan leave their life of exile and abuse in the Outskirts, setting out with their twin brothers to redeem themselves and become citizens of the Center. But shedding their past isn't as easy as they had hoped. When the system that shunned them becomes embroiled in political conflict and treachery, their unique abilities and experiences from the Outskirts make them invaluable to every faction. The runaways become pawns to friends as well as enemies, and with every step it becomes more difficult to*

*tell which is which.*

The world of Calem is fascinating to me. It was a world that hints of things readers would recognize, tying it to our own, but it was altogether different and new. I wanted to know more about it, the history behind its origins, how our world fell, how the ingenium were developed, why this society formed the way it did. The world of Calem is divided into districts determined by type of ingenium (i.e. The Tiger District) or lack thereof. These different districts radiate out from a central hub, The Center, which is the capitol of Calem. The politics, strengths, people and attributes of each district are really interesting and I hope that later books explore some of the people and locations that were only briefly touched on in Perception. Cashman includes a wonderful map of her world at the beginning of the book for those of us who are visual learners, and I found myself referring to it often. It was a great and helpful addition to the book as I could visually track the action and the journeys of Ardana, Rijan and their companions.

At first glance, it may seem like this world has some major similarities to the world of The Hunger Games: Calem vs. Panem, both worlds have distinct districts, the Campaign vs. the Games. The set up is similar, but once you delve into the story that's where the similarities for me ended. Cashman has a different voice than Collins and the plot lines of each book are completely their own. While The Hunger Games was a sci-fi/dystopian story, Perception felt more like a sci-fi/fantasy/historical. The world of Calem was harsh, the government inevitably corrupt, and evil was a-brewing, but I wouldn't call it a dystopia. Although both stories are essentially about attaining freedom, they approach it in entirely different ways and come to entirely different conclusions.

I loved the idea of the ingenium. Being bound to another creature and being able to telepathically communicate with them at all times is an intriguing concept. I think it gives a character more depth when they are not only seeing themselves through their own eyes, but also through the eyes of another who loves them unconditionally. Whether the perception of self is skewed or not because of that love, it lends some interest having access to multiple perspectives. The bond that Ardana and Rijan shared was really touching — their friendship, love and willingness to sacrifice for the other. When considering the overall theme of freedom, their relationship presents an interesting facet to the many-sided issue.

In regard to the ingenium, one thing I wished there was more of was the background behind why and how the ingenium came to be. I do love stories that can take an idea such as this, own it and make it work with little explanation, which Perception does. It's a concrete part of this fictional world. It's accepted. It just is. However, I love to know the history behind things and I was dying to know how the ingenium came into existence. Hopefully, it'll be something Cashman explores in later books (Please!)

Perception had some really interesting things to say about freedom and well... perception. These are ideas Cashman explores throughout the book as Ardana's main motivation in this story is attaining freedom. Freedom from her harsh life, from those who would rule over her, freedom to make her own choices,

freedom for those she loves, freedom from being bound to another person, etc. Her journey toward freedom is one of the most interesting aspects of the book as she comes to certain realizations about others, herself, her actions, her desires making her wonder if complete freedom is possible and how one's perceptions plays into it all.

While there were many parts of this story that I enjoyed, I did have a few issues with it. One of my main problems was that I had trouble following the action sometimes. At times plans and motivations of main characters were not clear, and at times I wondered why people were doing certain things and what was going on. It was not the "all will be revealed..." kind of lost. It was the kind of lost where you know you should know what's happening. I found myself rereading sections to try and figure out what I was missing. I don't know if the plans required a knowledge of the characters that I just didn't seem to have, or more brain-power than I possess (which is certainly possible) but a little more clarity in the explanation of plans would've been good. Also, I felt that some of the dialogue was a little confusing at times and that once in awhile character reactions had me scratching my head. All that said, the story was interesting, very fast-paced, had a large scope of movement (which I always enjoy) and kept me going even through those times where I wasn't quite following.

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Overall, Cashman has given her readers an exciting, romantic adventure debut that explores the ideas of what achieving freedom entails and how perception of truths and situations can shape one's view of the world.

### **Aimee (Getting Your Read On) says**

4.5 stars!

Why not 5? Just a bit of confusion early on and a bit of history I felt like the story lacked to fully understand the motivations behind the characters. Once I was passed the initial confusion, I was seriously hooked on this book.

I really enjoyed the connection between the siblings in this story and their tigers. Their devotion to each other was touching and real. I like how Ardana's ingenium, Rijan, is a mixture of friend, mentor and defender all rolled into one. Who wouldn't want that? I loved the binding ties of loyalty these animals and people had to each other. One of my favorite quotes from the book comes from Rijan in one of those mentoring moments. "You would be wise to remember how Maran's injustice made you feel so that we are always good to one another and to others."

Kliax is the stud of the show, no doubt. He is all man, warrior hero. Stud. All through the book I admired his patience and restraint. Probably because he is everything I am not. He didn't really give in to impulsive behavior, but instead thought things through and waited for the right moments to act. I enjoyed feeling the growing connection between Kliax and Ardana. There was some fabulous kisses.

This is a fantastic adventure story! This first book in The Tiger's Eye Trilogy is full of fast paced action that just never lets up. By the end of the book I was exhausted but I still wanted more! (and this was a long

book!) It was unlike anything that I've read before but had some vibes like Hunger Games. I'm really looking forward to the release of the next book at the end of 2011.

My BIG thanks to Heather for allowing me to read and review her book. (and providing a giveaway!!)

If anyone is interested, I will be hosting a giveaway for this book on my blog starting September 1st and ending on September 7th, 2011. One print copy and one ebook! <http://gettingyourreadonaimeebrown.bl...>

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### **Heidi says**

I am really not into teen\young adult books but I am so happy I read this book. I give it 4 1/2 stars out of 5. At first I thought this book reminds me of Hunger Games because both worlds have Districts and Hunger Games had the Games and Perception has the Campaign. The difference is how the heron finds her freedom or her perception of freedom. It also has the fantasy of Philip Pullman His Dark Matters with the connection between Human and ingenium animal and the unconditional love the human and ingenium have for one another.

The first few chapter were a little confusing and I wasn't sure what was going on and how the animals (ingenium) and people worked and to be honest I am still not sure I quit understand even after I finished reading the book. I hope the author will clarify the connection in her next book. At times I would get lost and have to reread the section because the action of the character didn't seem to fit or work with the scene presented in of the book.

I loved the idea of ingenium in this case a tiger and being able to telepathically communicate with them at all times. I also loved the fact that ingenium couldn't lie but could only communicate though what they saw as their perception. The love between the human and ingenuim is beautiful and I wish sometimes I could seem myself the way others see me.

I loved the heroin of the book Ardana and her ingenium Rijan. She was feisty, insecure about herself, strong, doesn't take no as an answer and tires so hard to right wrongs. She has a twin brother Kade and they telepathically communicate with each other and their ingenium. In the beginning of the book Kade and Ardana were never allowed to be alone with one another we see how their relationship changes when they are constantly with one another. Their connection is a beautiful and yet a painful bond and they feel each others passions, loss and desires.

Their is romance in the book but it is fun to read and I have to admit when Ardana wasn't sure of her feels I wanted to yell " How could you NOT love this guy? I love this guy." the romance is made for teenagers so their isn't anything to inappropriate.

There are several themes that float though out the book; What is freedom, What is truth, Unconditional love, Choice and Perception. Ardana explores each of this themes though out the book and when she find the answer to the question we learn a little more about Ardana and slowly fall in love with this character. The author had me asking myself the same question of what is freedom and what choices would I make if I was Ardana. I never felt the connection with Hunger Games as I feel with Perception.

With all the popular of young adult books and how many seem to be a knock off of another I find this book refreshing because it is its own story and book. There are sword fights, death match, romance with realistic charm, and amazing characters you will all in love with.

I could go on but just go read the book!!!

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## **Tammi says**

My first thought about Perception was: Confusing. The reader is dropped right into the middle of the action, with no explanation of who everyone is and what kind of world they're living in. You only get little bits of information at infrequent intervals, so I spent a lot of the first part of the book not sure what was going on. Because every character has an 'ingenium' (an animal companion/other half) there are twice as many names to learn and the names are quite difficult and often really similar (there's Ardana, Adamas and Adomar, then Kade, Khan and Kliax). If I was reading a paperback, I would have made myself dizzy by constantly flicking back to re-read and double-check things, but I read this on a Kindle, where I find it cumbersome to go back to previous pages, so I just lived with the confusion and kept reading.

Keeping reading, however, was a good thing. Despite what the synopsis says, I never got the sense that this was a post-apocalyptic future - apart from one reference to The Jungle Book, I didn't spot anything to suggest this was our world - what it did feel like was high fantasy and fortunately, I love high fantasy. Perception is a quest narrative, which includes newly discovered parentage, magic books, castles, secret passageways, buried treasure and an evil ruler who needs to be toppled, and I eat that stuff up with a spoon.

The protagonist and narrator of Perception is Ardana, who has been raised in the Outskirts (outside the legal districts of the land) with her brother, Kade. Ardana and Kade have tiger ingenium - Rijan and Adamas, respectively - creatures they are psychically linked with. The whole concept of ingenium is similar to the daemons in Phillip Pullman's His Dark Materials series, except the animals are real animals and not manifestations of a person's soul. I found that difference interesting; the bond between the humans and the animals was always apparent, but the animals had distinct personalities of their own. Rijan was my favourite character, actually, and the balance she found between being loyal to Ardana and fulfilling her own desires as a tigress was cool to read about. I had mixed feelings about Ardana, because I didn't always think her character was cohesively written - sometimes she seemed naive and immature, sometimes she seemed like a world-weary fighter. I didn't really get a handle on who she was as a whole, until the end (I liked her then, though).

The story sets off when strangers come looking for Kade in the Outskirts. Fearing for his life, Ardana and Kade (and their ingenium) run away and start on a journey to find their father. On their way they meet new allies and new enemies and it's not always possible to tell which is which. From here, the book seemed to go from one setting to another. There was the part in the forest, then the part in the safehouse, then the part in the castle. Some of these parts I enjoyed, but there were always some scenes that didn't work for me and the transitioning between them could feel awkward. I will say that the last part of the book, in which the characters take part in a tournament, is a whole lotta fun. It starts with a mad horseback race, turns into an Indiana Jones-style treasure hunt, complete with dangerous booby-traps and then culminates in one of the best fight scenes I've ever read. If you've ever wanted to read about an epic brawl that includes humans, swords, tigers, cobras and scorpions, then you'll find it here.

Obviously, this book is self-published and although this comment may be an affront to those who believe strongly in self-publishing, here goes: I do think this book would benefit from the kind of professionally polishing and grooming that goes on in publishing houses. However, I understand why the author wanted to get Perception out there and overall, it is a good thing that it is out there.

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## **Kristi Bernard says**

Books are wonderful for taking readers away to far away lands where the rules are different along with the peoples and culture. Perception gives readers lots to think about and forces us to look inside ourselves on how we view ourselves and how others perceive us to be. None of us can know how strong we are until we are forced to push ourselves to extreme limits. Most of us would do astonishing things we never thought possible unless it was to protect someone we love.

Cashman introduces readers to a world where human and animal are tied together through telepathy. This world houses various districts, each with a different perspective on how humans and their animal, ingenium as they are called, communicate, love and protect each other. All are honorable and truth is more precious than any treasure. But of course, like most world's there is always an enemy lurking in the shadows forcing those that are good to make sacrifices and even question their own worth.

Ardana and her ingenium tiger named Rijan, show us this tale of self discovery as they search for freedom for themselves, as well as, for their people of the Tiger District. A place that used to be their home until Baelon, a ruthless man who killed her mother and captured her father so that he could become the ruler of the Tiger District. His treachery and her need for revenge drives her and the reader along for an adventure of revenge, a battle for freedom and an understanding and acceptance of love, to find the truth and to set things right.

Ardana, along with her twin brother Kade and his tiger ingenium Adamas retreat to the Outskirts where survival is their main objective. Prepared to escape to the ocean, they encounter the Passion Vine Forest where they learn more about their heritage and their past. Ardana and Kade are half breeds. Their father a man from the Tiger District, and their mother a woman of the Passion Vine District fell in love. It was forbidden for districts to intermingle with one another, but love does conquer all. It was this love that started a fury of deceit and betrayal of two men who were once the best of friends. The father, Valdaran and his new enemy Baelon, the now Senator of the Tiger District.

As the story unfolds, new characters are introduced and create a complicated mission to save all of the districts. Ardana and Kade along with their ingenium are pushed to the limits of separation, love and determination to find who they are and where they ultimately belong. They need proof of who they are, which is written on papers secured away in a bunker guarded by Baelon. The papers are all they need to secure their future, save their father and bring back justice to the land they once called home.

Cashman introduces a world with oversized animals with extreme intelligence. Humanoid creatures with scales for skin, poison for blood, and a connection with trees and vines that can strangle or embrace. This story takes readers on a roller coaster ride that makes you root for good to conquer evil. There is something for everyone, love, bloody battles and descriptive scenery that any reader would long to see.

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## **Courtney (Fuzzy.Coffee.Books) says**

What I liked: 1) The entire plot. It was so fresh and new that I was just completely surprised and drawn in to the story from the very beginning. 2) The descriptions of the settings. I could completely immerse myself in

these settings. It was so described that I could almost smell the Passion Vine flowers, or taste the nectar. 3) Kade and Ana's relationship. There's a lot of stuff that you learn about from their past that would lead you to believe their relationship would be strained if existent at all. But they are very close, and seem to balance each other very well. 4) The title - I cannot imagine a more aptly named book than this. The meaning of the title made clear on p. 48 - it's all about our (their) perception of what is good and what is evil - Ana cherishes her ingenium (Rijan's) ability to only perceive things in black and white. There is no gray. 5) There is a love story, in the middle of this action novel.

What I didn't like: 1) Post-apocalyptic names are strange. Not really a complaint so much as an observation. 2) I really would have liked to get to know Kade better. I thought he was a very interesting character, and we got to know him from Ana's opinions of him, but I would have liked to understand his choices more.

Overall Opinion: I was completely drawn into Perception from the very beginning. One of the things about it that really speaks to Miz Cashman's talent as a writer was her ability to only reveal so much, as to keep you wondering the whole time. Additionally, it was a new and fresh plot, with interesting characters that are very real, without the "boxy" constraints of typecasting that you find in some books. Loved it, and can't wait for book 2!

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### **Donna says**

"I was immediately drawn to the characters of this book. I love post-apocalyptic stories and this is one of the best I've read. I was slightly confused at first about the relationship between the main characters and their tigers, was it a telepathic link or were the tigers an extension of the characters' souls (as in the Daemons in Golden Compass). Once I understood the relationship, it was much easier to understand. I didn't care for the unorthodox names of the characters, but that is really the only thing I have to complain about this book. The descriptions the author put forth were amazing, I felt I could actually hear and see the Passion Vine. I also loved the words of wisdom from the tiger Rijan: for example, "Worry is fear of the future. It is foolish to fear something unknown because you don't know it". Wow. This is a great book. I give it 5/5 stars and look forward to the second in the trilogy.

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### **Sarah Castillo says**

Perception, by Heather Cashman, is one of those animal companion books that there just aren't enough of. It's set in a post-apocalyptic world that has more in common with sword and sorcery genres than the usual sci-fi post-apocalyptic story.

I loved the interaction between the protagonists and their animal companions, called ingenium. In many books with animal companions, even when they speak telepathically like in Perception, the animal is subordinate to the human. The mutual respect between Ardana and her tiger, with her even differing to her tiger many times, is a refreshing change in the genre.

Like others, I wish that there had been more explanation on the ingenium, among other things. A lot of the time I felt a little lost. Cashman attempts to drop us into the world and let us find out everything on our own. However, I think that more explanation would have helped me feel more engaged from the beginning.

All in all, I thought it was a charming young adult novel, exploring interesting topics that are useful to contemplate for young adult audiences.

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### **Olivia says**

The overall plot was moving and engaging. However, when it came to changing scenes, especially when it came to the Heroine, I felt I had to re-read the passages several times to understand what had happened. Also, I felt that the main characters' personalities, traits, and purposes were lost in the physical tension and lust that over powered their stories. I felt it was a disservice to Kliax's background story because his development was based on his physical attributes and the sexual tension between him and Ana. I was very surprised that it was marketed to Young Adults because of some of the content. The fact that Kliax makes it look like he rapes Ana, right off, bothered me. Then all of his soldiers under him, thinks that he is repeatedly raping her as the story goes on. But it was made to seem ok, because he really wasn't or that all is fair in love and war. This greatly bothered me because I felt it made light of rape, most especially to a young audience.

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