



Survival of the Fittest: The Last Hope for the Human Race

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One night, seven teenagers wake completely alone and in the dark. Their parents are gone, and it seems everyone on earth has disappeared as well. Worse, the electricity is off. Surrounded by darkness, their differences no longer matter; they are the sole survivors of an alien attack and the last hope for humanity. But in the black of night, can they outrun the hulking creatures with the glowing red eyes?

Priya is the exotic girl who says what she thinks. Will was a star athlete before the attack. They find Trevor and Aiyana, the twins; Alex and Ricardo, the tough guys; and finally, Lindsey, the innocent. Together, the seven of them are the last humans on earth-but are they really humans at all? They have no idea that the government has known of the incoming alien attack for decades; to prepare they created special children with very special abilities.

The chosen seven are part alien and part human, and they exist to fight off the otherworldly forces, threatening to conquer the planet. But with such differing personalities, will the seven be able to put their pride behind and work together? They must move beyond the grief of lost friends and family and find the strength to go on; if they don't, the world will die, taken over by monstrous creatures that can smell your fear.

Survival of the Fittest: The Last Hope for the Human Race Details

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Author : Michael Taylor

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From Reader Review Survival of the Fittest: The Last Hope for the Human Race for online ebook

Geri says

I knew going into this that its about aliens attacking earth but its mostly about what happens before they get here. I thought the plot was very original and easily kept me interested. Some authors can't write what teens are really like but Michael Taylor was spot on. They were very believable. The aliens were very menacing and gross. Theres lots of action and fighting to keep you interested. Plus several WOW I didn't see that coming moments. I sure hope there's a sequel. I've got to know what Trevor's discovered. I got this book through Goodreads First Reads.

J.L. Dobias says

Survival of the Fittest by Michael Taylor

In the final analysis I enjoyed the story; but that's not saying I didn't have some problems reading it. This is a book that one could really want to give five stars to; but you would have to make a number of stretches to accomplish that. I wanted to like this but I must have some predefined prejudices that stand in the way. This has the earmarks for a great start to a new series of books with a fantastic premise and some interesting notions; but there are some style choices that stepped in the way of my enjoyment of the piece as a whole.

Lindsey Sutten finds herself alone in the darkness with confusion about where she is and why she's alone and uncertain of where her mother is: and she is afraid. This begins the first of several sections in the first chapter that introduce us to the main characters that will share this story. Having them each start with a separate section breaks up the initial tension by spreading it out in a slight confusing way; yet acts as a means to protect the reader from the up and coming style decisions that might jar a few people out of the story. But the trouble with Lindsey is that she sounds, at best, to be ten or twelve years old but is supposed to be 15 years old.

The second section is Alex and Ricardo and since more than one character shows up here we start to see the style choices showing up. The POV of choice seems to struggle at being Omniscient and at best perhaps subjective because it comes just a bit close to becoming Close third and that even starts to be head hopping but we can let it slide if we consider it to be Omniscient third. The problem I had was that the POV went from outside to often close to each boy one at a time and then jumps into a Plural POV that I just let slide because it was brief in this section. Unfortunately this seems to be a deliberate act that is used throughout the book. It is meant to achieve something (I think); but it keeps pushing me out of the story.

The story is interesting and suspenseful despite my struggles with the style and it keeps me into it; to find out what's going on and see what's going to happen. So far this is starting to read like one of those thrillers that often devolve into slashers. I'm not sure how eager I am to go on; but I forge ahead as the people group together first in small groups and then one large group of seven only to be attacked and separated. But this is good it gives us different dynamics within the group as they work their way back to becoming one group again.

The first part of the novel is named The Inner World Beginning. The second part is called The Outer World

Beginning. This should have been the biggest clue to another problem. Probably another that is just a personal problem to me. The next part takes us back 40 years to a time when Earth was visited by UFO's and we did all those strange alien autopsies and discovered that the aliens intended on invading earth and they were sending super soldiers that had been augmented. This is where things become X-files strange in more way than one. The decision is to create our own augmented army based on theirs so there are some experiments put into place. They are creepy experiments with rather cold heartless creepy people who are all trapped into the system that says the only way out is if we kill you.

The more important discovery in part two is the deceit. This novel is what I'll affectionately call a Deceitopia. I have read a number of them now. By the end of the chapter we discover that the seven people we read about earlier, who were left fighting for their lives against aliens while they were slowly transforming into their own version of these aliens; is all a simulation and these youths and many more are being held in stasis while they experience complete immersion into the virtual environment where they have nothing to fear as they can't get hurt. Which sort of kills all the tension built earlier; but the cool part is that their changes in world are changes that they are expected to undergo in the real world; so it's forgivable: this Deceit.

It's about now that we start experiencing a lot of the plural third sections and I almost at first thought it was perhaps somehow related to these seven and some connection they might have. That hope proves false when later, further narrative from the doctors and scientists on the outside indicates that often, when there are mobs of people together, the narrative starts describing things that happen to them all together in plural third. Almost like a mob. A huge problem though with the scientist and doctors is that they all seem to be the same cold type of personality that has rationalized why they do what they do while at the same time there is an almost false appearance that fear is held over them to keep them doing what they are told despite their conscience (which later you have to wonder if any of them have a conscience). Often their actions conflicted with what the narrator wanted us to believe. I found it very difficult to find any one of them that felt real while they seemed to vacillate back and forth up and down some moral scale that seemed to be there only as a means to drive the tension of the story instead of helping us find out who these people really are below the cold exteriors.

That and the strange decision that they couldn't implement their special forces until after the entire world is slaughtered seem to make the outside world part of the story hard to rationalize.

As for the inner world; that is vindicated somewhat when one of the researchers goes mad and tries to destroy the program putting anyone in the world at risk of real death. So real tension again.

As a whole this novel looks as though it's the possible beginning of a series and it does have some potential, though it might be just fine as a standalone considering the possibility of it going close into the horror genre. If you don't mind head hopping and the often shifts to Plural third person then there is a lot of food for thought in this novel; though you might have to throw a bit more suspension of disbelief into the decision making capabilities of all the adults.

This falls into SFF and horror with some Deceit-topic tendencies. Great read as long as you don't try to examine the adult player's motives too closely.

J.L. Dobias

Carol Wills says

Amazon Verified Purchase

This review is from: *Survival of the Fittest: The Last Hope for the Human Race* (Kindle Edition)

In this book Michael Taylor takes popular science fiction ideas, turns them upside down, adds in some genetic manipulation and weaves it all into clever and engaging plot. If you are a sci-fi fan then this book is well worth a read, it has all the elements of good sci-fi and then some. The seven main characters, teenagers, are engaging and clearly drawn. The plot drew this reader in from the get go, with no long descriptive passages up front, description are woven neatly into the story line, just the way I like it. The teens, some good, some bad and all rebels at heart are in for the ride of their lives. Will they save the world?

I'm a big sci-fi fan having read many good authors like Asimov, Bradbury and Clark et al. I found this an exceptionally enjoyable read from start to finish; with a killer hook for the next book. I think Michael Taylor has a winner on his hands...can't wait for the sequel. I highly recommend this book.

Carol Wills

Sarah Vanilla says

Pretty good. Some parts were confusing, and in my opinion, those parts were confusing because they were poorly written.

Frederick Danysh says

Aliens are coming to destroy humanity and the world's leaders have known for 50 years. A race of genetically enhanced teenagers are developed to fight the aliens and carry on humanity after the invasion. Unfortunately, the teens don't know what is happening at first. An interesting read and I believe one that young adults will enjoy. Free author's copy.

Roy Mauritsen says

I'm picky about what books I read and even more so about the ones I care to go back to and bother to leave a review of. This was a very enjoyable book. There is a lot that happens in Michael Taylor's story, it keeps a brisk pace because it has a lot of ground to cover. The cast of teens is an interesting mix of personalities, with Priya Hendri being a favorite character (for me). The story reminds me of TV series like *Falling Skies*, *Revolution* and *Heroes*.

I can easily imagine if I were to drive around some of the town's in Maryland I would recognize many of the local places that the author references in the story. One part of the story I found exceptionally interesting was the early genetics testing part (I'm trying to avoid spoiler references). I really enjoyed that story arc in particular and I could see that being fleshed out into its own novel and be just as engaging. Overall, Mr.

Taylor has setup an interesting story of a group of teens and how it is up to them to save mankind. The story does move along pretty quickly which I didn't mind overall as he does have to cover a lot of ground, but there were a few instances where I would have liked to have stayed a little longer in some scenes. I enjoyed this book enough that I already have bought the next book in the series "The Closest Enemy".

Terry Crawford Palardy says

Survival of the Fittest blends the elements of science fiction with a story line that looks at parent/child relationships, and world powers collaborating in the face of alien attack, and teen issues and roles complicated by the unsettling rules of engagement.

Anyone who has watched young teenagers become totally involved in video games and then instantly disengaged to take a phone call or a family conversation will appreciate their ability to detach and adjust to the unexpected. Teachers see this flexibility every day, as their students move from history content to chemistry to physical education and then to art or music ... the adult world expects that this generation will adapt to the new technologies ... never stopping to think that innovations today happen exponentially faster, and are a world apart from the changes we witnessed in the twentieth century.

Michael Taylor writes with the sensitivity of adults who spend their working lives guiding adolescents through the myriad changes life presents to them. His depiction of adults, those manipulating and those manipulated, is blunt, painfully so.

The story ends with the unknown ... it has a bit of a coming of age feel to it, and the characters themselves are faced with the choice of what will happen in their foreseeable future. This is a fascinating story, raising ethical questions and moral dilemmas for all who will read it.

I would recommend this book to all who are invested in the healthy development of adolescents, and perhaps to those media pundits who delight in running headline stories of negative events in teens' lives. Someone once said, "Love ... is not always what it seems."

jshesman says

A great book in a new series by one of my favorite authors. Reminds me of James Patterson. Lots of action, intertwining storylines, and plenty of cliffhangers. My students will love it. I am anxious for the sequel. Get busy writing - Michael Taylor!

Heather says

"Survival of the Fittest: The Last Hope for the Human Race" by Michael Taylor is a YA book about seven teenagers who suddenly find out that they have been genetically modified so that they can fight aliens that are intent on claiming the earth for their own. The book opens up with the seven teenagers who suddenly find themselves alone in a world where all other humans seem to have vanished. As they seek each other out, they all come face to face with strange creatures that seem intent on killing them. Will these seven teenagers

figure out the puzzle and do what is needed to survive?

This story was a fun read. Each of the teenagers had their own distinct personality and the interactions between them were very plausible. The author transports the reader 50 years earlier to explain why the world governments fear an invasion and why the only possible solution to the invasion is to genetically modify children so that they will be able to fight for the human race.

This book is for teenager/adult audiences. Teenagers will relate to the characters and adults will relate to the desire to protect our children at any cost. There was never a dull moment and the author ends the book with a cryptic warning that will, hopefully, be explored in a sequel.

This book was received for free through Goodreads First Reads. That in no way influenced my review.

BA Miller says

Great book by a wonderful, new author, Michael Taylor! It is intriguing and suspenseful- can't wait to read the sequel! Teens will love it!

Amandafarmer says

One of my favorite books. It's awesome Mr. Taylor. Can't wait to read the second book.

Michael Taylor says

Ok, so this is my book. What do you expect me to say? I loved it. Well, I loved writing it. I just hope people who read it will love it. I think the characters allow the reader to find someone to identify with.

I have been told that the dialogue for the teens is a little off (by my niece) and also that kids don't talk so nicey-nice. To her, thank you. I do appreciate hearing the bad as well as the good. How else can an author improve without critiques?

One thing that I'm unsure about is the number of characters... For some, there are too many, for others there are just enough. I'm not sure. While I write, inside my own head, I can keep all their stories moving. Is that confusing for some readers? Well, that's something I'd like to know.

I am almost done with the sequel to *Survival of the Fittest* and hope to have it out in mid 2012.

I hope you enjoyed it. Be sure to let me know.

Leanne says

*Received through Goodreads First Reads program from author/publisher for an honest review

**Also posted on Amazon.com (under Leanne)

Survival of the Fittest is a story about the preparation of seven teenagers who have been altered by genetic manipulation to survive an impending alien attack. Unbeknownst to them, their parents have sacrificed them to a secret scientific/medical organization, which have turned them into human-alien hybrids. They find themselves apparently alone in the world and defending themselves against alien attacks. While doing this, they must figure out what is happening to them and why.

Taylor writes a complex, engaging story with seven distinct teenage characters. I enjoyed the realistic feel of their shocking discovery of their new bodies, the terror of attacking aliens, and their confusion in their expected role in the new world. I especially liked the flashback excerpts Taylor used to introduce the history of the somewhat sinister secret organization and the unfolding of the journey to its response to the alien invasion. I found the plot quite unique and commend Taylor with successfully combining classic science fiction elements, as well as young adult contemporary fiction.

Overall, Survival of the Fittest was an entertaining, compelling read. The teaser at the end was unexpected and I am eagerly awaiting the sequel. I would definitely recommend this to teen and adult readers who are fans of science fiction, especially alien invasion stories.

Eric Buffington says

I really enjoyed reading this book. It is filled with characters that are realistic and twists that leave me guessing at what will happen next. Lots of fun to read! I hope I win the signed copy!

Rick F. says

Survival Of The Fittest: The Last Hope For The Human Race by Michael Taylor is truly a superb example of the end result of a vivid imagination and way above average writing skills! This is truly a must read- a winner!

Character development of "The Chose Seven" is spot on- Mr Taylor, using his ample skills to carve out complex yet affecting portaitS of each. The plot involving the relationships and struggles of the human/part alien protagonists is fast pasted and quite involving. The reader truly feels transported to another land, another time, as the seven fight truly evil forces attempting to take over their planet.

Survival Of The Fittest: The Last Hope For The Human Race has it all- a super plot, great action and complex characters that are multi-dimentional- all make for a truly worthwhile reading experience!

A JAMES MASON COMMUNITY BOOK CLUB MUST READ

RICK FRIEDMAN
FOUNDER

THE JAMES MASON COMMUNITY BOOK CLUB
