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 ***Gunslinger Girl* by Lyndsay Ely (review)**

Elizabeth Bush

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REVIEW

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**In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:**

Reviewed by:

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*Elizabeth Bush*

Ely, Lyndsay *Gunslinger Girl*. Patterson/Little,  
2018 [368p] Trade ed. ISBN 978-0-316-55510-4 \$17.99  
E-book ed. ISBN 978-0-316-55530-2 \$9.99  
Reviewed from galleys R\* Gr. 9-12

Serendipity is six months shy of the age of majority when her loveless father bargains her away to another commune, since as a fertile young woman she's prized in this post-apocalyptic world. Having none of that, Pity, as she's known, sneaks away with her mother's pistols and her best friend, Finn, heading east toward Columbia, capital of the Confederacy of North America. After Finn is killed by thieves, Pity is rescued and brought to Cessation, a lawless city in the west where citizens are free of the restrictive farming communes and visitors enjoy the hedonism of Casimir, a Las Vegas-style hub with every vice money can buy, and entertainment nonpareil at Halcyon Singh's Theatre Vespertine. Pity's sharpshooter skills earn her a solo act, some friends, and a place to call home, but certainly not the peace and freedom she ran away for. Dirty politics has its grip in this Western-like dystopia, and Pity's guns are called into service to protect Cessation, her new boyfriend, Max, and the people who have given her shelter—if, that is, she can actually shoot for the kill in a clinch and figure out who's the devil here and who's on the side of the tarnished angels. Sex, drugs, and violence infuse Pity's new milieu, but since assault weapons don't seem to have survived CONA's historical cataclysms, pistol and rifle shootouts are relatively genteel affairs, and those with the sharpest eyes and the sense to keep count of their bullets get to live another day. Ely constructs a laudably realized world and leaves the door ajar for Pity's return—and it would be a dang shame if she has ridden permanently off into the sunset. EB

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**FINLAY, ADRIANNE** *Your One and Only*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018 [320p]

Trade ed. ISBN 978-0-544-99147-7 \$17.99

E-book ed. ISBN 978-1-328-80991-9 \$17.99

Reviewed from galleys

R Gr. 9-12

The year is 2407, and humans no longer exist as a natural species—they're considered to be disease-ridden creatures of the past that have been subsequently improved upon. After thirty generations of calibrated commingling of personalities, the clones of *Vispera* have mostly lost the slightest sense of humanity. When Gen-310, as this cohort of clones is known, are introduced to Jack, a quick-tempered, lab-bred human boy with asthma, they have no clue that he is part of a de-extinction project intended to locate and retrieve a potentially important genetic code that might restore and sustain the next generation of *Homo factus*. While the Gen-310s primarily avoid Jack, Althea-310 sees the beauty in Jack's humanity and in having individual thoughts and feelings. However, the rest of her community doesn't share her regard, and Althea-310 may be eliminated in the Binding ceremony. This future world is a classic pseudo-utopian dystopia à la Lowry's *The Giver* (BCCB 4/93), where the messy and unpredictable nature of humanity has been sacrificed in the name of perfection. Readers will breathlessly follow Jack and Althea-310 as they attempt to break free of the rigid functioning of *Vispera* and journey towards a reimagined humanity. MK



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