



Review by: Heather
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Pros: Gorgeous world, story, and characters
Cons: Heavier on the world-building than on action
Rating: 5 out of 5



Tava's mother suffered a terrible fate at the hands of marauding shapeshifters before Tava ever had the chance to know her. So when Tava's father is murdered and she subsequently encounters a Shifterai warband, she's determined to get away from them, even if they don't seem to match up with her mother's description.

Warband leader Kodan sees that Tava's village intends to treat her as a servant at best now that she has no family, and he's determined to help her—particularly because he knows her secret, that she is also a shapeshifter. He wants her to see for herself what the Shifterai are truly like, and knows the only way to accomplish that is to convince her to live among his people.

As Tava learns about the Shifterai, Kodan falls in love with her. There are just a few problems with that, however. One is the high-ranked Shifterai woman who's determined to win Kodan as her mate. Another is Tava's uncertain abilities. And there's still the matter of the cruel shapeshifters who took her mother captive all those years ago.

Jean Johnson's [*Shifting Plains*](#) takes place in another part of the same world as her *Sons of Destiny* series. Much like those books, it luxuriates in a level of world-building few authors investigate. Because of this, the pace is slower than that of an action-oriented novel. Personally I love it, but I mention it as a matter of taste.

I truly love Jean's books. Her characters have plenty of depth and personality. Her tone is playful, and her sizzling-hot sex scenes are inventive and fun. I don't recommend her books for prudes—they're for folks who can laugh in the bedroom and enjoy their sexuality.

As always, her world-building is truly delightful. I adore the exploration of Shifterai culture and its contrast with its neighbors. Everything gets a seat at the table, from courtship customs to leadership roles. It helps that Tava is such a curious, questioning character, willing to ask about anything she doesn't understand. She's also a delightfully strong woman paired with a handsome and caring man, and it's always hard to resist such a combination.

If you want to try out Jean's novels but don't want to dive straight into the long *Sons* series, *Shifting Plains* would make a great way to dip your feet in the water. I think it would give you a lovely feel for her style and world.