

Angels Found
By Ryan Southwick
Synopsis

Vampires are real. Everybody knows someone who's seen one, or who's mysteriously disappeared. The US government dismisses vampires as conspiracy theory, so citizens have taken matters into their own hands by forming local militias—even in small towns like Graven, Montana.

ANNE PERRIN knows the importance of this better than anyone. After the destruction of Z-Tech, her home, and the deaths of the two highest-ranking vampires, Anne is the new, unwilling master of all vampires. A malevolent ENTITY occupies part of her mind, its apocalyptic plans kept in check only by a small computer implant above her right breast, which allows her to maintain her free will. Anne wants nothing more than to eliminate this threat and live a normal life with her new android wife, ZIMA, but until they learn more about the Entity, the safest place for it is in her own head.

During a family dinner, Anne receives a surprise visit from the last person she expected: TABBY, the daughter she'd given up for closed adoption at birth. Her wife, ZIMA, appears threatened by this intruder to their new marriage and runs away, leaving Anne hurt, confused, and with the daunting prospect of reconciling with the daughter she felt she'd abandoned.

Anne's attempt to patch Zima's relationship with Tabby takes an unpredicted spin when it turns out the reason Zima had been avoiding her was because her programming confused daughter with mother, making Tabby irresistibly alluring, and resulting in an unintended sexual encounter that puts them both on the run, neither of them sure how to address the issue with Anne.

Anne discovers the indiscretion at the same time that a former captor, whom she'd had a tragic vision of weeks before, pays a visit. His unnaturally powerful embrace disrupts her implant, allowing the Entity to take control.

The Entity's vision of the world doesn't include humans, and with the vampire epidemic running unchecked, it now has what it needs to wipe humanity from the map, and it intends to use Anne as its instrument. The Entity can kill her with a thought, and if she attempts to thwart its plans, it won't hesitate. A new master vampire will emerge, and the Entity will continue its plans. If she obeys, however, there's a very slim chance she can carve a place in the new world where a sliver of humanity's essence may survive. Given those terrible choices, Anne parts from her family to spare them the crushing burden of carrying out the Entity's plan.

Zima, convinces the Entity to let her help. Together, she and Anne gather her former sire's vampires, who were in hiding, and raise an army of thousands. Her friends seek the help of the Resistance, an organized group of free-willed vampires, but with Zima as her general, Anne is unstoppable. In her absence, her ex-lover, CHARLIE, discovers the Entity's origins—a crashed

alien spaceship deep in Russia's tundra. They rush to investigate, only to find that Z-Tech's archrival, ALVIN ORWING, is already there.

Anne and Zima have tricked the Resistance into thinking they're gathering their forces, when in fact they board the vampires on planes and fly them off to Russia. Whether Anne dies or not, the Entity's victory—and humanity's demise—is all but assured. Tabby summons her back to surrender the Resistance. With nothing to lose, and yearning to see her daughter, Anne agrees. The Resistance uses a combination of technology, *chi* expertise, and their raw love for Anne to break the Entity's hold and shield her from its influence. At the same time, Charlie liberates the Entity, which turns out to be nothing more than a computer module, from the spaceship after a grueling battle with a lone, resuscitated alien.

The world is safe for the moment. Anne and her friends recover in Resistance headquarters, where Anne adjusts to her role as leader and unites all vampires as one. The Entity was a slave, they discover, just as Zima had been to Orwing. The alien plans to terraform the Earth into something uninhabitable by humans, and the Entity is the key. Without it, the alien cannot complete its plans.

Desperate and determined to make things work with Zima, Tabby gives one last attempt to see if they can co-exist as just mother-and-daughter, and finally discover a workaround. Anne, Tabby, and Zima rejoice at their chance for a new life as a loving family.