



Until the Beginning

Amy Plum

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When Juneau's clan disappeared, she lost so much more than her friends and family. She soon discovered everything she thought she knew about her life was a lie. Her people's gifts were actually secret abilities that others wanted, desperately enough to kidnap an entire village.

Juneau and her new companion Miles's cross-country journey to find her clan has led them to a game preserve in New Mexico. Now Juneau's people are finally within reach, and she will stop at nothing to save them. But she has a target on her back too, because unbeknownst to her she is the key to unlocking everything. To rescue her people - and herself - Juneau must discover what she, and her abilities, are truly capable of.

Until the Beginning Details

Date : Published May 5th 2015 by HarperTeen

ISBN : 9780062225634

Author : Amy Plum

Format : Hardcover 336 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Fantasy, Science Fiction, Dystopia, Romance

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From Reader Review Until the Beginning for online ebook

TheBlueBookworm says

[

the blue bookworm reviews @ wordpress (hide spoiler)]

Shannon (It Starts At Midnight) says

First, this is the sequel to *After the End*. So if you haven't read that... well, this won't make much sense to you, so probably go read that first? I will say, before we get into the actual review, that this sequel is definitely a win. I liked the first book, but this book really pulled everything together wonderfully, so if you had doubts about it being a duology, no worries there!

First, I am going to talk about the one thing I wasn't so fond of in the first book: The magic. In *Until the Beginning*, it is fleshed out much more, with a lot more explanation and purpose, and basically negates all of the trouble I had with it in the first book, to the point where I actually really liked it! There were a few revelations that were a tad farfetched for me, but on the whole, it was a solid attribute in the story.

Now, to the best part of the book: Juneau and Miles! I *adore* Juneau and Miles, and their witty banter, and their escalating romance, and trust and understandings they have come to. They have both grown tremendously during these two books, all while maintaining the best parts about their individualities. I really don't think character development gets better than that. Juneau is strong and wise and ready to do anything for her people, but Miles helps to bring out her softer side, her more vulnerable side. Miles is still level headed and realistic, making Juneau a bit more grounded. But she is able to show him what it means to be loyal and to fight for what you believe in, and Miles starts to believe in *himself*. Basically, Amy Plum can do character development like no other.

And there is a **road trip!** I do love a road trip, especially when there is a time constraint and unknown dangers. This book, of course, has both. There are secrets to be uncovered, mysteries to figure out, and the great part is, that both Juneau **and** Miles's strengths and resources are needed to figure out their next steps. Oh, and no worries, there are major swoons to be had as well! I don't want to talk too much about the plot, because I don't want to spoil anything, but it moved along wonderfully, I read the book quickly because I was anxious to know what was coming next!

Bottom Line: If you haven't started this series, I recommend. If you have, and liked *After the End*, you will probably **love** *Until the Beginning*. It has all the good parts of *After the End*, but expands on them and explains and reveals so, so much. And come on, it's Juneau and Miles!

This review was originally posted on It Starts at Midnight

Alienor ✕ French Frowner ✕ says

? **Book 1** : After the End ★★★★

Edit : I just learnt that it's a duology, actually. It was the end, then? *take a breath* *Okaaaay*.

? **Take away the banter**

Where is the chemistry between Miles and Juneau? Their hilarious dialogues? The slow growth of their affection? If I'm being fair, I could have seen it coming at the end of book 1. Because *what did I love so much in Miles and Juneau's relationship at first?*

Their differences. Their banter. The hilarious complete inability for Miles to stand wildlife.

Now, I'm not saying that he morphed into some super country man, but he evolved for sure and - *oh god, I can't believe what I'm going to say but - he was funnier when he was clueless*. I know, I suck. Sue me. But take away the banter, and **there's not quite enough sparks between them to make me interested in their relationship**. Contrary to *After the End* where I was delighted by their interactions, I couldn't help but notice the fact that they felt *forced* here. In my opinion, anyway.

Moreover, as I said, it can sound weird that I complain about Miles's changes, because usually I'm all for character development but in my opinion **he lost too much of his own identity, too much of what made me love him in the first place**. Although some of his thoughts made me smile still, it occurred way more rarely than before. So, yes. *Okay*. He grew up. I'm not saying he's bad, because he's not. Yet I lost any connection I could have in *After the End*. I don't care anymore, and I'm the first to be sad about it, trust me.

Finally, talk about **one of the most anticlimactic sex scene I ever read** (for a couple I ship, let's say) : I just didn't care, like, at all, as it appeared from nowhere. Of course it's YA so everything fades into black and I'm completely okay with that but still, I'm usually more invested, while here, it didn't even make me smile. If anything, it annoyed me, because of course no protection for Juneau. Okay, they're "one with the Yara" and so can't get any disease, there's that. Anyway, what about *kids*? That's not like the girl could have been on the pill, living recluse the way she did and all. But **OF COURSE THAT'S FANTASTIC**, because everybody knows that it's always the case on the first time. Oh, wait - that's because of the Yara. Silly me.

? **Please don't change anything, you might interest me**

If the story is still fast-paced, almost nothing happens until the end, and **even then I wasn't enthralled nor captivated by the story**.

Basically, Juneau wants to save her clan. Miles is trailing along with her. Whit is not to be trusted. Powerful dudes try to kidnap her, because she's SO important.

Ring a bell? Oh, YES. It was the plot of *After the End*. Well, now, you've got the same here, without the shocking beginning and the hilarious conversations. *Yikes*.

To be clear, I felt like we ran round in circles, and the last development about the abilities of Juneau and her clan didn't satisfy me as I wasn't a big fan of the *so-special status* of Juneau it implies. In a word, if the *Yara* didn't convince me in the first book, my interest didn't increase here, but I sure rolled my eyes pretty often, I have to admit.

? **Add some cartoonish villains**

Indeed the villain(s)'s (lack of) characterization makes him (them) so superficial that if his (their) behavior is (are) truly awful and disrespectful (and fucking crazy), I didn't *feel* anything toward him (them) : while my **brain** was able to see how bad he is (they are), yet **I never felt anything. No fear, let alone fury. My heartbeat never grew wild. Not for a second.** Truth be told, their portrayal are cartoonish, as they offer no nuances. Not nearly enough anyway.

I like nuances. I'm in love with nuances. **Please give me nuances.**

? To sum up, ***Until the Beginning wasn't terrible***, and Amy Plum knows how to write for sure, but it lost me along the way - ~~so much that I'm not even sure that I'll read the last book, because sadly, I'm not sure I'll feel the need to. There will be no book 3, apparently.~~

For more of my reviews, please visit:

♥Rachel♥ says

4.5 Stars

Excellent conclusion to an exciting duology! This is YA at its best! I definitely recommend the audio version. Emily Rankin and Graham Hamilton's performance made the story come to life.

I was amazed with Juneau and Miles ability to strategize and use whatever they had available in pursuit of the ultimate goal of saving Juneau's clan. Juneau had to sort through her beliefs to and find her own truths, but she didn't let the questions hold her or her powers back. I have to say her father and clan trained Juneau well, in spite of the lies they told.

I loved the positive character growth Miles had through this journey, and I was pleased he caught on so quickly and became a real asset. The romance was lovely. Not so much that it took over the plot, but enough swoony moments to satisfy this romance junky.

Yodamom says

3.5 stars, great narration

Marla Mei says

3.5 stars

I don't know how to write a review on this one. Can I just settle on awesome? Okay, this book is awesome.

You should read the duology. 'Nuff said.

Elena says

3.5

I'm satisfied with the ending, but I didn't like this quite as much as the first one.

Haraiah Eve says

FULL REVIEW <http://haraiah.blogspot.com/2015/06/r...>

Ah, I don't know about you but I'm pretty sure that's Tris and Four..

I asked my sister last night who she thinks these two are and she was like, "*Um, Shailene and Four...? Ha ha ha.*"

Confirmed.

Christina says

4 stars!

" I wish I could talk to my mother. The same blood flowed through her veins. And she took that blood and made it into something she thought could save the world...until she realized that it had the potential to destroy it. "

Spoilers ahead

This is the sequel to After The End. In the first book we were introduced to Juneau and Miles. We were let in on the secret of Juneau's clan and why they are immune to disease, why they don't seem to age. It all came down to a drug called Amrit that the elders of the clan created, originally as a way to help endangered species of animals. But once they realized the side effects, having tested it on themselves, they went into hiding deep in the Alaskan wilderness. Most thought it best to keep knowledge of the drug hidden, thinking that it would ultimately be bad for the humanity of the world. So they created the lie of World War 3 and the world being a wasteland to satisfy the next generations curiosity.

Now the thing about this drug that makes it so unique? One of it's ingredients was originally a small bit of Juneau's mothers blood...and something about her mothers blood and Juneau's makes the Amrit possible. So when one of the clan elders breaks away to try to sell the Amrit and get his fame and fortune for it, we now

understand why Juneau is so important. They need her blood, both to produce more Amrit and to look for possible synthetic replacements.

The end of the first book left us with Miles being shot and Juneau administering Amrit to him in an attempt to save him. Now we're left wondering if he'll live or die.

" If Miles awakes, he will be a changed person. He will have the gift of life : free of disease and aging. If he doesn't, then the one person who matters most to me - outside of my clan, of course - will be gone. Abruptly. And forever. "

So we wait to see what Miles fate will be, while at the same time Juneau continues on her quest to locate and rescue her clan.

This was a lot better than the first one, for me. It had a faster pace and more action in it. Not to mention it was nice to have an explanation for everything. I ended up liking the ending. My only issue still was the romance. This 2 book series takes place within a few weeks, so the relationship between Juneau and Miles just seemed to go from one extreme to the next. Also, I didn't like how nonchalant Juneau was about the sex thing, like losing her virginity to a guy she basically just met and disliked and didn't trust last week was the most normal thing. I mean, I probably sound so old fashioned, but seriously? Overall though, not a bad read :)

Tori (InToriLex) says

Find this and other Reviews at InToriLex

"When you're in a group, you offer your skills for the use and survival of the group. You don't pretend you don't have them. It's not only disingenuous. It's withholding your donation to the common good."

I'm a big fan of authors who are able to convey meaning into characters without it coming off as unnatural or disrupting the story's flow. Juneau is still grappling with who she is, and how she's going to handle the world now that it's no longer confined to her clan. She's trying to trust herself, while realizing the people she trusted most have lied and kept things from her, her whole life. On the run Miles and Juneau have to deal with the trauma in their lives so that they can learn from it. Miles while still a skeptic at heart starts to learn and respect Gaia and the power of the Yara.

These two teenagers have to hold it together so that they can do the right thing. The changing perspectives in the book, like in *After the End* made the pacing of the book fast, and also never seemed to have any awkward transitioning. The supernatural elements of the book, and the way that Juneau continues to use nature and animals as tools give this book really interesting moments, that wouldn't work well without Ms. Plum's awesome finesse. Animals play a big role and in ways that I definitely wasn't expecting in the end.

Although I really enjoyed the book, it was not without flaws. Things were explained, but nothing was resolved in terms of where these characters will end up long term. The Yara could also have been fleshed out more, it's lazy to just call it deep nature connection=awesome super powers. Definitely read this if you're a fan

of the first, just prepare for a more introspective book. There were still some awesome and creative action scenes, and well described new characters definitely keep the story alive. This a well paced action thriller, with unique ideas about how nature rewards it's loyal followers.

Danielle (Love at First Page) says

4-4.5 stars

Until the Beginning is everything I was hoping it would be and more! Though I didn't flat out *love* *After the End*, I knew the sequel had the potential to be all sorts of amazing, and I was right. It takes all the things I enjoyed about the first book and magnifies them brilliantly, while the few negatives I had are no longer much of an issue. The fact that the series is a duology rather than a trilogy is icing on the cake.

The story picks up exactly where we last left Juneau and Miles: he is dying from a bullet wound and to save him, she administers the rites of her clan that will give him long life. While waiting for him to recover, Juneau devises a plan to rescue her loved ones, who are being held hostage by someone who wants the rites' secret ingredients for himself. Taking action is her primary concern, but she's also still reeling from the discoveries she's made over the last few days. From everything her clan has always told her, what is truth and what is a lie? Action, romance, and personal revelations abound in Amy Plum's spellbinding sequel.

My main objection to the first book was not connecting to the fantasy aspect. It was jarring and out of place, never quite fitting into the otherwise realistic, modern story. Essentially, Juneau and her clan can connect to nature on a higher level, which gifts them with abilities like seeing into the future or through the mind of an animal. They also perform an aforementioned rite that grants each member long life, fast healing, and a greater sense of the Yara (the earth's life force). Though I still had some trouble with this part of the story in *Until the Beginning*, I also found that it felt more organic. Maybe that's just because it's now the second book and I was prepared for it, but I also think it's used to a much greater effect, in terms of character development. We learn new ideas about where these powers actually come from, and that's something both Miles and Juneau struggle to make sense of throughout the story.

The actual plot is extremely well-paced. Part survivalist, part action, part rescue mission, there's never a dull moment. Juneau and Miles have to rely on instinct and their own experiences to formulate any plans, and many times they're not even sure what their next steps will be. They just know that they'll do whatever it takes to save her people. What I really liked is that Juneau and Miles work together as a team. While she has undoubtedly been the leader of their duo, it's great to see Miles contribute his own skills and assets and even take the lead at various points. At the beginning of the first book, I would never have guessed these two could communicate so well, but that's exactly what they do. They listen and respect each other.

Which brings me to my favorite aspect of the story: the characters. I grew to love them so much in this sequel! Juneau, that weird, tough, resourceful girl who could survive in the wild with nothing but the clothes on her back (and apparently those aren't even needed). I like that she is never one to wallow or give up hope, despite all that she has recently faced. She has moments of vulnerability and willingly goes to Miles for comfort, but she also stays incredibly focused. I connected to her much better in this book than in the first. My favorite, though, is still Miles. My God this boy is endearingly hilarious. Amy Plum does a fantastic job with his sarcastic attitude and witty one-liners. But he's much more than a handsome face and funny guy; I love how he stepped up and grew to be (almost) as fearless as Juneau. The romance, too, is even better this

time around. It's heartfelt and believable, with plenty of swoony moments. Miles and Juneau make a quirky opposites-attract pair, and their banter is some of the best. No drama or doubts, either!

If you haven't yet started this duology, I highly recommend it. *Until the Beginning* is now my favorite Amy Plum book, and I want everyone to read it for Miles' chapters alone. I dare you not to love that kid. This is also the second series she has avoided a love triangle, which just makes me love her more. Can't wait to see what she writes next!

Thanks to the publisher for sending me an ARC in exchange for my honest review!

This review can also be found at Love at First Page.

Nereyda (Nick & Nereyda's Infinite Booklist) says

This is one of those series that I wish more readers knew about. I know it wasn't one of those super hyped books, which is sad because it's a great series. Not only that, it's one of the few YA duologies (that I know of) and I am all for more duologies. Sometimes, a story doesn't need 6 books. Not only was I fascinated by this story, but I could very well see this making a great TV show. I'm still not exactly sure what to classify this as, it's not really a dystopia but it's so much more than just a contemporary since it has some magical elements mixed in. Either way, it's a really great series!

After discovering that her whole world has been a lie (this isn't a spoiler, it's in the summary for the first book so don't worry), Juneau is on the search for her family and the rest of her clan, who have been kidnapped due to their secret abilities. With the help of Miles, whose father is responsible for her missing clan, they go on a road trip to find them and figure out why they are after her people. Of course, Juneau is still adjusting to the fact that the world is still going on normally and that it didn't end like she was led to believe. She is getting accustomed to this new life, and with the help of Miles she is learning to adapt and use her old customs with a few modern things that he has been trying to show her along the way.

Despite the fact that this is only a two book series, the author still managed to make Juneau and Miles's relationship a slow one, which I really liked. There are so many reasons why they shouldn't be together, but they stop trying to fight them. This was a very realistic and sex positive YA book, you guys know how much I love those. I really was on edge while listening to this one and I ended up listening to this in only a few short hours. I'm sad it's over because I could have had more of this world and more of Juneau and Miles (I know, even though I said I want more duologies) but I really did love the way this ended. It wrapped up nicely, but not too perfectly and with just the right amount of intrigue and 'what ifs.' A fantastic series by Amy Plum!

Audiobook Comments: I heard the first book on audio and knew this was the way for me to read this book too. I really love that we get two narrators, they both did such a great job. I especially liked Graham's portrayal of Miles and would love to listen to him narrate something else. Both he and Emily were age appropriate and really good and tones and different voices and emotions which is what I'm always looking for in audiobooks.

Dark Faerie Tales says

Review courtesy of Dark Faerie Tales

Quick & Dirty: An exciting second installment about Juneau's adventure that I enjoyed.

Opening Sentence: Miles has been dead for one hour.

The Review:

Juneau is back on the run, and this time she's starting the journey all alone. Miles died, and although she's fighting to bring and keep him alive with the Rite, she doesn't know the side effects of one who is not from her clan undergoing the ceremony. She is still following leads to track down her clans, this time with a renewed belief in the Yara and her connection to it, but she will soon realize that the forces they are up against are more powerful than imagined. They have resources and motivations that could make them deadly, so Juneau must tread carefully, for she has everything to lose.

I really enjoyed Juneau's character in this second installment. She had a determination and a confidence that she carried herself that made her fun to read about; this is not to say, however, that she was immune from the doubts and worries of having a whole clan's future resting on her shoulders. I appreciated watching her development and adaptation to the new modern world she had been dragged into unexpectedly. As well as this, her relationship with Miles changed her in ways that I liked watching, and by the end of the novel she had found renewed courage and strength. As a reader, she was an interesting point of view, and I found her spin on everything refreshing – after all, it was through the eyes of one who had never known modern comforts.

Miles was the love interest and second point of view that I was following. In the last book, I believe I found him somewhat lazy and a deadweight, and in this novel you really see him transition both mentally and physically to a helpful force to Juneau's cause. He also grew into himself, and developed into a character with much more confidence who was a match to Juneau. I really liked this change and how Juneau inspired it, and it gave a nice nod to how their relationship inspired each other to become better. Speaking of the relationship, I still was a fan of the love story, and I found it moved at a good pace and not the insta-love often found in young adult novels that I've grown to dislike.

There were new plot developments in this second installment, as well as continuations of the first book. For example, Juneau's connection with the earth – although she seemed to redeem it by the end of the first book, new ideas brought to light in the second lead to her questioning it all over again. Juneau leading the clan was also a constant, as she felt the duty to save her people and that carried her decisions throughout the series. It seemed like an awful amount of pressure for a teenage girl, but Juneau being Juneau, she handled it admirably. New characters were revealed, and motivations of already known ones were revealed. I appreciate knowing backstories of the antagonists in novels because it gives their actions an explanation, so knowing more about Whit was a welcome addition to this second book.

Altogether, I really did enjoy this novel and this series. I think the first book had a lot more worldbuilding and was an entry to the plotline and introduction to the characters. As such, I liked the second book better than the first, as it had more action and twists. The characters were all strong and had lots of depth. It was a really easy book to follow, and very readable; both point of views were interesting, and I never felt bored or like the plot had lagged, as I remember doing in the first. There were quite a few reveals as the novel went

on, and those twists were fun to read. I would definitely recommend this to fans of the first – I think you will be impressed!

Notable Scene:

My body melts away until there is nothing left but a small white ball, feathers, beak, and a flash of light. And like that, I am sprung into the air. The words of the song grow clearer, and I sense another bird keeping pace with me, just outside my vision. I flap my wings, banking steeply as we climb together, high over the endless ocean. We catch the wind and soar.

FTC Advisory: HarperTeen provided me with a copy of Until the Beginning. No goody bags, sponsorships, “material connections,” or bribes were exchanged for my review.

Neil (or bleed) says

"It's a no-man's-land between two epic stories. After the end of one . . . until the beginning of the next."

If I'm being honest I love this book less compared to its predecessor. I don't know why but it felt like something has been lost. Something that I can't explain. Nonetheless, I still enjoyed reading this book. So much. I still adored the main characters Juneau and Miles and their chemistry. These two really clicked with each other. I giggled whenever they are teasing and throwing banters. Hahaha.

There are just some few events or actions that seemed forced and rushed between Juneau and Miles. Besides, even if the first few chapters weren't boring or a snoozefest, it felt like nothing much happened on those chapters, just the main character being angsty and such and it became, in my opinion, a way to insert some romantic scenes that weren't necessary. Or maybe it was, but anyway.

I admit, I'm rooting for some intense action; luckily, I got it. Even it wasn't that epic, I thought I still enjoyed it and gave me the jitters. And, of course, I also got answers, woo-hoo! Some clarification of the truth about the mystery in this book that I didn't get on the first book. Ah yes, it still came down to science but the author made a senseful philosophical statement about the old ways. That I found meaningful and remarkable.

As a whole, Until the Beginning fulfill my satisfaction and it brought me to a great and exhilarating adventure of unique abilities, truth-seeking, science, lies, the old ways, nature, family, love and friendship.

The question is: Is that Four and Tris on the cover?

nick says

Last year, I read and loved Amy Plum's *After the End*. It was a book that surprised me in a good way and had a heroine that I loved with every fiber of my being. I wasn't sure that it would be possible for this sequel and final book of the duology to be even better than book 1, but Amy Plum surpassed all my expectations with *Until the Beginning* and gifted us all with a stunning and satisfying conclusion.

Until the Beginning starts off where the cliffhanger of *After the End* left us with. It was a brutal ending, but one that was filled with hope. This book in general was filled with hope. As a sequel, *Until the Beginning* was a lot more action-packed. There was just so much going on. I felt like I was physically in the book alongside Miles and Juneau and boy was I emotionally exhausted at times because I was just so invested in the story. This is the kind of book that had me glued to my seat, flipping non-stop through the pages and even after I put down the book to go get food, my thoughts would immediately rush to this book. It was the kind of book that wholly consumed me and I have no doubt it will render other readers an emotional mess as well. I was never sure what obstacle Amy Plum was going to set in front of our protagonists and I was terrified of what was awaiting them. The great thing about books like *Until the Beginning* is the non-stop action. If you're an action-in-books junkie, then this is the perfect book for you because Miles and Juneau were constantly running from one dangerous situation to another. It truly was an exhilarating book and you're just left feeling breathless and thinking about what an epic ride it was! The final showdown between Miles, Juneau and the horrible villains in this book was epic in many ways. I hated the villains so much so I was ready for them to receive their dues.

Until the Beginning would not have been a perfect book without the amazing protagonists. Miles and Juneau were amazing in this book. Juneau was a character I admired from the start of *After the End*. She's a character that I instantly connected with, so I was ready to get back to being inside her head. She continued to impress me in this installment and she continued to awe me with her fierceness, strength and loyalty towards her loved ones. She was one amazing heroine and definitely makes my list of top 10 all time favorite protagonists. Amy Plum captured her flaws and her strengths so beautifully through her voice. The character that surprised me in this book was Miles. I had some issues with him in the previous book, but by the end he had grown on me. In this book, I downright fell in love with this boy. He has grown so much from the previous book, hardened and more mature. He no longer was that naive young boy he was and I love the strong man that he has become. He was so endearing and his devotion to Juneau was nothing short of loveable. Miles and Juneau's relationship in *Until the Beginning* was another strong element of this sequel. My goodness! These two were so deeply romantic and I loved how Amy Plum explored their intimate relationship so beautifully. It was sweet, romantic and gave me the butterflies. Also, can I just say how absolutely amazing the banter between these two is? Seriously, I was giggling like a little girl because of how adorable they were. What made their relationship so tight was how open they were with each other and how they were a couple that worked together. It's rare to see couples cooperate in YA books, so this book was refreshing.

Until the Beginning and the *After the End* duology is one that I don't hesitate even a little bit to push on you readers. It's one of those series that deserves to be read and praised by everyone. Do yourself a favor and read this and experience the beauty of these characters.
