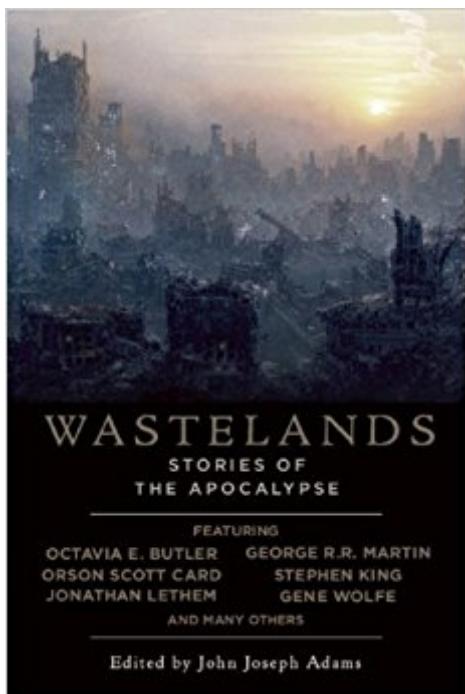


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Wastelands: Stories Of The Apocalypse



Synopsis

Famine, Death, War, and Pestilence: The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, the harbingers of Armageddon — these are our guides through the Wastelands... From the Book of Revelations to The Road Warrior; from A Canticle for Leibowitz to The Road, storytellers have long imagined the end of the world, weaving tales of catastrophe, chaos, and calamity. Gathering together the best post-apocalyptic literature of the last two decades from many of todayâ™s most renowned authors of speculative fiction, including George R.R. Martin, Gene Wolfe, Orson Scott Card, Carol Emshwiller, Jonathan Lethem, Octavia E. Butler, and Stephen King, Wastelands explores the scientific, psychological, and philosophical questions of what it means to remain human in the wake of Armageddon. Skyhorse Publishing, under our Night Shade and Talos imprints, is proud to publish a broad range of titles for readers interested in science fiction (space opera, time travel, hard SF, alien invasion, near-future dystopia), fantasy (grimdark, sword and sorcery, contemporary urban fantasy, steampunk, alternative history), and horror (zombies, vampires, and the occult and supernatural), and much more. While not every title we publish becomes a New York Times bestseller, a national bestseller, or a Hugo or Nebula award-winner, we are committed to publishing quality books from a diverse group of authors.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. This harrowing reprint anthology of 22 apocalyptic tales reflects the stresses of contemporary international politics, with more than half published since 2000. All depict unsettling societal, physical and psychological adaptations their authors postulate as necessary for survival

after the end of the world. Keynoted by Stephen King's *The End of the Whole Mess*, the volume's common denominator is hubris: that tragic human proclivity for placing oneself at the center of the universe, and each story uniquely traces the results. Some highlight human hope, even optimism, like Orson Scott Card's *Salvage* and Tobias Buckell's *Waiting for the Zephyr*. Others, like James Van Pelt's *The Last of the O-Forms* and Nancy Kress's *Inertia*, treat identity by exploring mutation. Several, like Elizabeth Bear's *And the Deep Blue Sea* and Jack McDevitt's *Never Despair*, gauge the height of human striving, while others, like George R.R. Martin's *Dark, Dark Were the Tunnels*, Carol Emshwiller's *Killers* and M. Rickert's *Bread and Bombs*, plumb the depths of human prejudice, jealousy and fear. Beware of Paolo Bacigalupi's far-future *The People of Sand and Slag*, though; that one will break your heart. (Feb.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

With this well-chosen set of postapocalyptic stories, editor Adams provides a bit of everything that is best about the trope, from bleak, empty worlds to beacons of hope in an otherwise awful situation. Only Jerry Oltion's "Judgment Passed" • about what happens when a space expedition returns to an Earth to which Jesus has returned, and the rapture has come without them, is original to the collection. Stephen King's bleak "The End of the Whole Mess" • opens, John Langan's much more recent "Episode Seven: Last Stand against the Pack in the Kingdom of the Purple Flowers" • closes, and they are wildly different. Highlights in between include Octavia Butler's "Speech Sounds," • in which civilization has ended because a disease has made most people unable to talk, read, or do any number of once-taken-for-granted things, and Elizabeth Bear's "And the Deep Blue Sea," • a brilliant take on a world laid waste and a devil's bargain that treads in Roger Zelazny's manic footsteps. A well-chosen selection of well-crafted stories, offering something to please nearly every postapocalyptic palate. --Regina Schroeder

Everybody is dead and gone with just a few strong willed souls holding onto a hopeless existence. Why are these stories so appealing? Because we all consider ourselves fighters. We are all right there with each protagonist fighting the good fight to overcome impossible odds. These stories are connected by this common thread. They are about people trying to survive in post apocalyptic worlds. Some worlds are similar to our own. Some are impossible hellscapes. There is a father and daughter desperately trying to hold onto their traveling ragtag zoo of freakish mutated animals. Intrepid explorers returning to a desolate toxic Earth after many millennia. A group of system administrators bleakly watching the collapse of the Internet and civilization and trying to survive in

the dark aftermath. Contributing writers are Stephen King, George R. R. Martin, Tobias S. Buckell, Cory Doctorow, Catherine Wells and many other notable story tellers. An excellent imaginative collection.

This book was a bit of hit and miss for me. I am not sure that I like short story form for this genre. I have read *The Road*, *Swan Song*, *The Stand* and others that reached their full potential because there was time and length to do so. I have a couple of other anthologies for this genre to read and perhaps I will change my mind.

This was a collection worthy of the award winning authors listed. It had a satisfying variety of perspectives on the end of the world as well as on the people who face it. A great read for any fan of the sub-genre.

It's a collection of short stories so some are good/very good/ok. Worth the purchase, it's an interesting collection.

there are a couple of really good short stories in here but most imho aren't all that and a few were so bad i couldn't read more than a couple of pages. this book is truly a mixed bag of short stories. i hate to say this but this is one i would not purchase if given another opportunity.

This is a great anthology. The stories are excellent. Highly recommended.

The thing about *Wastelands* is that it is very uneven. Perhaps it is because the post-apocalyptic genre is so wide, or so bare, but for every great story there are three or four or five which is a chore to read. Joe Sherry and Slippard do a great job breaking down the stories individual without spoiling anything, so instead I will focus just on the tales that make this volume worth it. * "The End of the Whole Mess," by Stephen King. King is a great writer, always fun and easy to read. * "The People of Sand and Slag," by Paolo Bacigalupi. Perhaps the most disturbing book in the collection, as Bacigalupi seems to understand where genetic engineering is going. * "Dark, Dark Were the Tunnels," by George R.R. Martin. A Cold War parable. Anyone who loved golden age Isaac Asimov and Arthur C. Clarke will feel at home here. * "Judgment Passed," by Jerry Olten. An odd story as it deals with the rapture from the point of view of atheist astronauts who were out of the solar system at the time. * "Mute," by Gene Wolf. You need to read this. *Mute*, alone, makes buying this book

worth it, even if you just buy the Kindle edition and read it on your computer. *Mute* is only ten pages, but that includes a short intro in which Neil Gaiman gives the following advice: (1) Trust the text implicitly. The answers are in there. (2) Do not trust the text farther than you can throw it, if that far. It's tricksy and desperate stuff, and it may go off in your hand at any time. (3) Reread. It's better the second time. Actually, it's more confusing the second time. The third time I really paid attention to why the protagonist could be thinking her thoughts. And I drew a map. (*Mute* tends to have negative reviews in summaries. If you only read it once it's disturbing, but you completely miss what is happening.) * "The End of the World As We Know It," by Dale Bailey. The end of the world is not the most important thing to happen to the protagonist, to a local consequence of it is. A wonderful story of grieving. * "A Song Before Sunset," by David Grigg. Reads like an episode of *The Twilight Zone*, in the best sense. If the same book for the same price was just these stories, it would have been a great deal, well worth the \$10.85 paperback price. Don't feel obligated to read the rest.'

This was a good set of stories. Not your typically apocalyptic stuff. I liked the length of the stories, easily read in an evening.

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