



The End is Now

John Joseph Adams , Hugh Howey , Scott Sigler , Seanan McGuire , Jamie Ford , Elizabeth Bear , Ben H. Winters , Jonathan Maberry , more... Daniel H. Wilson , Robin Wasserman ...less

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Famine. Death. War. Pestilence. These are the harbingers of the biblical apocalypse, of the End of the World. In science fiction, the end is triggered by less figurative means: nuclear holocaust, biological warfare/pandemic, ecological disaster, or cosmological cataclysm. But before any catastrophe, there are people who see it coming. During, there are heroes who fight against it. And after, there are the survivors who persevere and try to rebuild. **THE APOCALYPSE TRIPTYCH** will tell their stories. Edited by acclaimed anthologist John Joseph Adams and bestselling author Hugh Howey, **The Apocalypse Triptych** is a series of three anthologies of apocalyptic fiction. **THE END IS NIGH** focuses on life before the apocalypse. **THE END IS NOW** turns its attention to life during the apocalypse. And **THE END HAS COME** explores life after the apocalypse. **THE END IS NIGH** is about the match. **THE END HAS COME** is about what will rise from the ashes. **THE END IS NOW** is about the conflagration. **THE END IS NOW** table of contents: INTRODUCTION by John Joseph Adams - **HERD IMMUNITY** by Tananarive Due - **THE SIXTH DAY OF DEER CAMP** by Scott Sigler - **GOODNIGHT STARS** by Annie Bellet - **ROCK MANNING CAN'T HEAR YOU** by Charlie Jane Anders - **FRUITING BODIES** by Seanan McGuire - **BLACK MONDAY** by Sarah Langan - **ANGELS OF THE APOCALYPSE** by Nancy Kress - **AGENT ISOLATED** by David Wellington - **THE GODS WILL NOT BE SLAIN** by Ken Liu - **YOU'VE NEVER SEEN EVERYTHING** by Elizabeth Bear - **BRING THEM DOWN** by Ben H. Winters - **TWILIGHT OF THE MUSIC MACHINES** by Megan Arkenberg - **SUNSET HOLLOW** by Jonathan Maberry - **PENANCE** by Jake Kerr - **AVTOMAT** by Daniel H. Wilson - **DANCING WITH BATGIRL IN THE LAND OF NOD** by Will McIntosh - **BY THE HAIR OF THE MOON** by Jamie Ford - **TO WRESTLE NOT AGAINST FLESH AND BLOOD** by Desirina Boskovich - **IN THE MOUNTAIN** by Hugh Howey - **DEAR JOHN** by Robin Wasserman."

The End is Now Details

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From Reader Review The End is Now for online ebook

Alison says

Overall, I think I liked the first book in the series better, but this was still enjoyable. It was fun to get into a story and realize that it was a continuation of one from the first book. Very much looking forward to book 3!

Richard Eyres says

The second part in the series. I think this one had more misses than the last, but about the same amount of hits.

Hugh Howey ruled this - an excellent story and I am really looking forward to the third part. Desirina Boskovich still has a good story, even it wasn't as good as the first part. Annie Bellet and Jake Kerr round off the hit return authours, while Elizabeth Bear rocked the new comers.

Sarah Langan failed for the second time, and Jonathan Maberry lost it big time mainly due to the narration. Daniel H Wilson has to be the worse, i couldn't even finish it.

Looking forward to the final part of this series. Hopefully the hits will stay there, and will drag up a few of the others.

Stephanie (Librarianish) Davidson says

This is actually a review of the whole series. I group together the stories by whether they're continued throughout two or more of the books.

Pieces in All Three Anthologies:

Robin Wasserman: The Balm and the Wound; Dear John; in the Valley of the Shadow of the Promised Land
- apocalyptic cult and a con artist taking care of the kids, in the first story.
- survivor writing Dear John letters from a safe place under a mountain in the second
- kid who was dumped in the first story w/ the protagonist, as the center of his own religious cult (and thinks the con artist was his father), in the third.

These weren't my favorites, but they were interesting. I would have rather listened to them in series with each other, to get the through line; I didn't get the connection between them until re-scanning the tables of contents to write these summaries.

Charlie Jane Anders: Break! Break! Break!; Rock Manning Can't Hear You; The Last Movie Ever Made
- kids way way way out of control... hyper hyper, making movies.

Ken Liu: The Gods Will Not Be chained; The Gods Will Not Be Slain; The Gods Have Not Died in Vain
- this is the ghost in the machine series; girl's father starts communicating with her from beyond the grave,

through AI. Continues throughout. I really liked these. The gods are the AIs that want to be in control. It's less about them taking control of everyday systems, and more political, in a way. The third book brings a new AI character to life in a very interesting way. One of my favorites of the series.

Jake Kerr: *Wedding Day*; *Penance*; *The Gray Sunrise*

- two women who are wanting to get married, but they're waiting for the lottery that will take them off-world; then marriages are prohibited, and one can't take the other.

- In *Penance*, the story is about the civil servant who has to break the news to lottery entrants. In the last, a different set of characters, with a guy who dreamed of having a boat when he grew up, and now does - but has to use it to get off land to avoid the asteroid. Along the way, his son grows up quite a bit, and has his own dreams of future.

It's a nice, heart-wrenching series. The stories all take place in the same universe, but aren't otherwise connected.

Tananarive Due: *Removal Order*; *Herd Immunity*; *Carriers*

- young woman taking care of her grandmother, finally has to leave because of outbreak. In the second, she's on the road, as the virus spreads. In the third, we learn more about her own immunity, and about a time when she and other carriers were captured and experimented on. The narrator wasn't so great in the third one, unfortunately.

Jamie Ford: *This Unkempt World is Falling to Pieces*; *By the Hair of the Moon*; *The Uncertainty Machine*

- this one was fun, and reminded me a bit of a Dr. Who — steampunk-ish, set in a party for the rich, to watch the end of the world by comet, but the staff are having their own fun. I'm not sure I listened to parts 2 and 3...

Ben H. Winters: *Bring Her To Me*; *Bring Them Down*; *Heaven Come Down*

- super creepy. Everyone hears in ALL CAPS THE WORD OF GOD, and in the first story they've all been told to buy meat, slice it super thin, and poison it. Except there's one girl who doesn't hear the voice. And a boy who likes her. (view spoiler) I wasn't thrilled with the narration in this story, either. Lots of misses for me on narration in the third book.

Hugh Howey: *In the Air*; *In the Mountain*; *In the Woods*

- set in the same universe of his *Silo* series! The first story is about a family who does not take shelter in the silos or a mountain retreat where the man's lover is waiting. The second story is set in the mountain, and we learn what the families who have come have been told and what their options are for survival. In the third, we conclude with a connection to the *Silo* series that's actually pretty necessary to understanding the impact.

Annie Bellet: *Goodnight Moon*; *Goodnight Stars*; *Goodnight Earth*

- astronaut, her daughter on earth

Will McIntosh: *Dancing with Death in the Land of Nod*; *Dancing with Batgirl in the Land of Nod*; *Dancing with a Stranger in the Land of Nod*

- a little like locked-in, but as an outbreak; continues in the second and third

Megan Arkenberg: Houses Without Air; Twilight of the Music Machines; Like All Beautiful Places
- arty san francisco reaction to impending end of the world

Scott Sigler: The Fifth Day of Deer Camp; The Sixth Day of Deer Camp; The Seventh Day of Deer Camp
- in a way, my favorite of all. Set in the UP w/ a bunch of Wisconsin and Northern Michiganders who actually spend more time playing cards and drinking beer than hunting deer. But then the invasion comes... In the second book, they find the alien spaceship, and have to deal w/ survival as well as what to do with the ship and its remaining living inhabitants. In the third, an unlikely hero, in an impossible situation.

Nancy Kress: Pretty Soon the Four Horsemen...; Angels of the Apocalypse; Blessings
- really interesting, w/ the mom of a young girl questioning whether there's a growing passivity among kids born at the same time. The second book picks up about 10 years later, and deals with the effects of the lack of aggression and the global political economy. In the third, it's revealed that this was supposed to have been a gift to humanity, or at least was presented as such. And some people are still quite violent.

Seanan McGuire: Spores; Fruiting Bodies; Resistance
- the most heart-wrenching of the group, for sure. Woman's lab creates an out of control mold, and her wife is among the first victims. She escapes w/ her daughter to try to save her. In the second, they're on the run and trying to stay sterile, (view spoiler) In the third, there's a possibility of redemption.

Jonathan Maberry: She's Got a Ticket to Ride; Sunset Hollow; Jingo and the Hammerman
- starts with a detective hunting down a girl whose parents think she's gone to a cult (and probably has, but she believes it). In the second, it's a different set of characters. In the third, different characters again.

Sarah Langan: Love Perverts; Black Monday; Prototype
- in the first, a young boy is trying to find his parents and baby sister, and the ticket for an underground bunker. In the second, it's set in the compound and decisions to let people in. Not sure I listened to the third.

Two out of Three

Desirina Boskovich: Heaven is a Place on Planet X (1); To Wrestle not Against Flesh and Blood (2)

Elizabeth Bear: Agent Isolated (2); Agent Neutralized (3)

Singlets:

Tobias Buckell: System Reset (1)

Jack McDevitt: Enjoy the Moment (1)

Paolo Bacigalupi: Shooting the Apocalypse (1)

Daniel H. Wilson: Avtomat (2)

Carrie Vaughn: Bannerless (3)

Chris Avellone: Acts of Creation (3)

Leife Shallcross: Wandering Star (3)

Mira Grant: The Happiest Place (3)

Katrina McBride says

I really liked this, but it was really hard to keep track of the stories from the previous book. Half of the time I

would be halfway through before I remembered the first thread and a few times I couldn't remember the first story at all. I like the idea a lot but I think there are too many stories for this to work.

That said, Hugh Howey's portion was far and away my favorite. Great little bonus to the Silo world.

R J K Lee says

A damn good follow-up. Great continuations of the stories in volume one. A lot of them I actually preferred to the first story, and enjoyed seeing where the fucked-up situations led, especially interesting when the characters changed due to the former protagonist dying or whatnot. In this volume everyone is obviously right in the thick of it with few if any options remaining, which makes for more intensity overall. I was going to list out my favorites in detail but for now I'll just mention a few must-reads and come back to this review later (yeah, yeah, I'm not really a review-person). Charlie Jane Anders' Rock Manning Can't Hear You was so much better than the first one and the first one was already excellent. I really loved seeing how this already weird punker fit into the end of the world. The development of Ben Winters' Bring Them Down got downright stressful and the ending was appropriately messed up and fated. Megan Arkenberg's Twilight of the Music Machines was another favorite of mine, perhaps similar to Anders' story in some way with the focus on a creative group, some music-lovers trying to survive a broken world. Man, Jake Kerr's Penance is one which changed protagonists (if I remembering the first story right) and it certainly intensified the story with an ending that makes you smile in a wow-that's-just-awful manner. In a similar vein, Robin Wasserman's was an excellent change of story approach, told through letters. Really, I found them all to be great selections. Looking forward to the third volume.

Paul says

Some great stories and continuations to the first collection. Robert Wasserman, like the first collection, for me us the standout but there are plenty of other great stories as well. The twist on the Wool universe fir Howey's story is brilliant and I look forward to seeing how many of the authors wrao up the trilogy. Only negative is the completely different order of the stories to the first collection. It would have been a bit easier to read in the same order.

Erin Glaser says

The second in a trilogy of Apocalyptic short stories, The End is Now covers the Apocalypse itself (as opposed to pre- and post-) in all of it's many possible fictional possibilities. Most of the stories from the first collection (The End is Nigh) are continued here, though many of them pick up years or decades after the first chapter and are from the perspective of a completely different character. Understandable given the scope of the project but often the change in tone or narration was so different it almost seemed to be written by someone else. 4/5 simply because I enjoyed the stories in the first anthology more. Still a very solid and creative read-- several of these imagined Apocalypses make a simple nuclear winter look like a spa massage.

Andrea says

I liked this even better than THE END IS NIGH. I think these books are especially great in audiobook form, though one of the narrators makes me laugh with his intensity.

I'm Booked says

The End is Now is the second collection of stories in the Apocalypse Triptych, and as each author further develops his or her world with each anthology, it really should be read after you have completed The End is Nigh.

Each story in the collection either takes place where the first one left off or introduces us to new characters in the author's world but they were all written so that the reader could easily recall the original storyline.

I enjoyed the collection but Ben H. Winters, Hugh Howey and Robin Wasserman each crafted stories that are incredible and I find myself wishing that they had developed them into full length novels!

I'm eagerly awaiting the third and final book in the collection!

Carolyn F. says

Anthology. I'm going to reach each author's work in this triptych. Starting with Volume 1, then Volume 2 and lastly Volume 3. I'm hoping that each story will give an extension of the beginning story.

3.85 stars average. A lot of really great stories in this anthology

1. Herd Immunity by Tananarive Due. Did she know what would happen? 5 stars
2. The Sixth Day at Deer Camp by Scott Sigler. The friends find out the survivors are much more than they thought. Good story. 4 stars.
3. Goodnight Stars by Annie Bellet. Trying to get home while everything is falling apart. They receive a sad message that is really appreciated. 4 stars.
4. Rock Manning Can't Hear You by Charlie Jane Anders. Some sort of bomb goes off after Rock & Sally make another Harold Lloyd-ish movie. Now the world has to somehow move on. Enjoyed this story. 4 stars
5. Fruiting Bodies by Seanan McGuire. The mold is growing and now someone else close to the protagonist succumbs. Still the reactions seem muted. 2-1/2 stars
6. Black Monday by Sarah Langan. A group of scientists try desperately to make cyborgs they can send to the surface to help people survive below with awful consequences. 4 stars.
7. Angels of the Apocalypse by Nancy Kress. A woman helps her sister and the ones like her even though she doesn't understand what makes them tick. Another good one. 4 stars.

8. Agent Isolated by David Wellington. The man from the last story escapes, he tries to save people, then just a couple of people, but nothing works. Really sad story. 4 stars
 9. The Gods Will Not be Slain by Ken Liu. Chaos, then some lessening, then a potential for another acceleration. Another good story. 4 stars
 10. You've Never Seen Everything by Elizabeth Bear. A woman walks through hell to get home and finds out they've moved on. Really ending. 4 stars.
 11. Bring them Down by Ben H. Winters. The power takes over after they felt things had changed. Another good, confusing story. I hope the 3rd story explains everything. 4 stars
 12. Twilight of the Music Machines by Megan Arkenberg. It's like I started a book in the middle. I just don't understand. 2-1/2 stars
 13. Sunset Hollow by Jonathan Maberry. So most of these stories are a continuation in some way from book one, to book two and then book three. Story one was about an asteroid. This one is about zombies. I get that the author wants the story to read as frantic thoughts but it's a lot of repeat phrases, sometimes with one word different. Drove me crazy. 2 stars.
 14. Penance by Jake Kerr. One of the lottery workers finally feels like he's helping someone. Great story. 5 stars
 15. Avtomat by Daniel H. Wilson. An ancient relic brings mechanicals to life in Russia. Good story. 4 stars.
 16. Dancing with Batgirl in the Land of Nod by Will McIntosh. As the disease spreads, some people try to clear their conscious before they are unable to speak. 3-1/2 stars.
 17. By the Hair of the Moon by Jamie Ford. A survivor in an opium den tries to find a way to escape what's happening. Good story. 3-1/2 stars
 18. To Wrestle Not Against Flesh and Blood by Desirina Boskovich. Waiting for the next phase, they learned they were tricked and then turn on each other. A very sad ending. 4 stars.
 19. In the Mountain by Hugh Howey. The start of the Founders and their realization of how long they really have in there and how many can make it. 4 stars.
 20. Dear John by Robin Wasserman. Wow, just wonderful story. One of the survivors writes goodbye letters to her lovers and tries to figure out what she wants next. Really good! 5 stars
-

Donna says

As with the first book in the triptych, *The End is Nigh*, this was an above-average collection of stories. With just a couple of exceptions they all continue the story arc from the first book. While this book can certainly be enjoyed as a stand alone, there is a lot of depth to be gained by reading them in order.

The following give my ratings for each story and a brief note for myself. The title in parentheses is the story

from the first book that each one follows.

3.5 Herd Immunity (Removal Order)--The desperate need for human companionship can be the kiss of death.

4.0 The Sixth Day of Deer Camp (The Fifth Day of Deer Camp)--In the midst of a violent alien invasion, one man sees some common ground.

3.5 Goodnight Stars (Goodnight Moon)--A bit too treacly sweet but a good description of a harrowing drive as asteroids rain down.

2.0 Rock Manning Can't Hear you (Break! Break! Break!)--Like the first story, I just couldn't connect with this frenetic mess.

4.0 Fruiting Bodies (Spores)--Gah! The world overcome by fungus and one woman's last efforts to save her daughter.

4.5 Black Monday (Love Perverts)--A desperate plan to build cyborgs to help the human race survive an asteroid impact goes frighteningly wrong.

4.0 Angels of the Apocalypse (Pretty Soon the Four Horsemen Are Going to Come Riding Through)--Human evolution takes a sudden turn toward cooperation and passivity but the rest of the human race is going out fighting.

4.5 Agent Isolated (Agent Unknown)--There's just no good way to contain a zombie apocalypse.

4.0 The Gods Will Not Be Slain (The Gods Will Not Be Chained)--Just like the old gods, the new gods use humans as playthings to be discarded.

3.0 You've Never Seen Everything (no story in first book)--You can't go home again, but you can sure try. Decent story about trying to get home but marred by an extremely unlikely trek across the Southwest US.

2.5 Bring Them Down (Bring Her to Me)--This felt too much like a fragment of a story but I'm curious to read the third part.

2.5 Twilight of the Music Machines (Houses Without Air)--Everyone going crazy in their own way at the end of the world.

4.0 Sunset Hollow (She's Got a Ticket to Ride)--This was set in a different world from the first story. Excellently creepy zombie tale.

4.5 Penance (Wedding Day)--Overwhelming survivor's guilt.

2.5 Avtomat (no story in first book)--Interesting but didn't really fit with the theme of the book.

4.5 Dancing With Batgirl in the Land of Nod (Dancing With Death in the Land of Nod)--That moment when it's too late for the last thing you wanted to say to your loved one.

2.5 By the Hair of the Moon (This Unkempt World is Falling to Pieces)--Like the first one, I thought this story was okay but it didn't stand out. I think the steampunk setting feels out of place.

4.0 To Wrestle Not Against Flesh and Blood (Heaven is a Place on Planet X)--This one had a depressingly real feel to it. Things fall apart in the US as right-wing conspiracy theorists end up fighting against the military who are trying to save us from aliens.

4.5 In the Mountain (In the Air)--I love Wool so this look at another aspect of that fateful last day was right up my alley. We see the consequences of forcing people into life boats and then realizing there aren't enough supplies for the long haul.

3.5 Dear John (The Balm and the Wound)--A great line in this one: "Maybe forever together is worse than being alone." Surviving in a hermetically sealed box isn't always what it's cracked up to be.

Shilpi Goel says

"The End is Now" is the second book in the Apocalypse Triptych. I'd immensely enjoyed #1, "The End is Nigh" (review here), and I've been a huge fan of the connected short stories idea.

Some of my favorites in this collection (in the order of their appearance in the book) are:

Tananarive Due's "Herd Immunity" (prequel: "Removal Order" in #1): Though I enjoyed "Removal Order", I wouldn't have gushed with praise about it. But, "Herd Immunity" is another story entirely (ha!). The protagonist, Nayima, is more well-defined here. The transformation the end of the world has brought in her -- from a young woman fighting against all odds to care for her dying grandmother to a selfish, unapologetic woman looking out for companionship in the times when mere survival is a feat, is startling. It is also sadly believable. Though the editors and the author might not agree, I think Due's stories will be appreciated more if read in order.

Nancy Kress's "Angels of the Apocalypse" (prequel: "Pretty Soon the Four Horsemen are Going to Come Riding Through" in #1): Like Due's stories, I think these too deserve to be read in order --- the bigger picture is more attractive than the isolated stories. Interesting portrayal of how nice (to the point of stupidity) people evoke different emotions in the general population --- one faction strives to be the protector and the other, the predator.

Jake Kerr's "Penance" (prequel: "Wedding Day" in #1): "Wedding Day" and "Penance" share the apocalypse, but not the people. As such, they can be read in isolation. "Penance" is an amazing take on how messengers with a conscience suffer while delivering bad news.

Will McIntosh's "Dancing with the Batgirl in the Land of Nod" (prequel: "Dancing with Death in the Land of Nod" in #1): I think the sequel falls a bit short of the prequel (again, no common characters really), but it's fantastic nevertheless. One common theme in the two stories is how we tend to forgive loved ones that annoy or betray us in the times when all hell breaks loose.

Robin Wasserman's "Dear John" (prequel: "The Balm and the Wound" in #1): I'd definitely recommend reading the prequel before reading this one --- it'll be fun to know the background stories of the characters. "Dear John" is just a bunch of letters written by a woman, Heather, to all the males she's had in her life. When the world is ending, Heather is safe in a shelter with fellow believers, all members of a cult whose young leader had accurately predicted the apocalypse. When the world was still alive, Heather had been the girl men left behind; she's writing these letters for closure --- they won't be delivered (well, all but her last

one, which is to the current male in her life), because all those men are most certainly dead. It's interesting how, in every letter, Heather imagines how the man died --- it's a painful death for men who ill-treated her, and a more peaceful one for those she liked.

Thanks, John Joseph Adams and Hugh Howey, for doing a wonderful job. Looking forward to #3...

David says

I was so excited to finally have *The End Is Now* to read after reading *The End is Nigh*. I was really happy that many of the authors have returned to continue their stories. While many of the stories pick up right where they left off while others are occurring further along their timeline. If you are someone who loves tales of the apocalypse and horror I highly recommend reading this series. There are many great writers with a wide range of end of the world scenarios. The writing is top notch and continues to hold you captive while you see where it all leads.

The book leads off with the story *Herd Immunity* by Tananarive Due who tells us a frightening story of 90% of the population that is wiped out from a 72 hour virus. This is a frightening story of a lonely girl looking for anyone she can find companionship with while she is traveling along a road following a solitary man. The stranger is apprehensive to have any contact for fear of contamination. In *The Sixth Day of Deer Camp* is a continuation of *The Fifth Day of Deer Camp* with the action picking up right where it left off. Our group has the terrifying decision to make after an alien craft has crashed close their cabin in the middle of nowhere during a very cold winter. The suspense that Scott Sigler throws in our face is fantastic as is his twist which was completely unseen. *Goodnight Stars* is another great continuation, that continues the story *Goodbye Moon*, and Annie Bellet steps up the suspense in a big way. The moon is now destroyed and now communications have become hit and miss. Her daughter now struggles to understand and except her loss. Seanan mcguire's story continues to be more terrifying than her first. With the spores now everywhere there is no place of safety. A mother and her daughter live day to day in search of 'safe' food and water while desperately trying to avoid becoming contaminated with the spores. After losing her partner she wants nothing more than to keep her daughter safe from the mold she unknowingly is responsible creating. *Agent Isolated* by David Wellington is a fantastic action packed end of the world Zombie tale. A group of people are desperate to get out of the city and reach the harbor where they believe a boat will take them to safety. After long and dangerous travel thru the city they arrive at the shore. What they find isn't at all expected and is more terrifying than the mystery of why people are turning into Zombies. Ken Liu's story *The Gods Will Not Be Slain* is so creative and such different way to have the end of the world arrive. Instead of virus, zombies or out of control weather we have people's minds uploaded to the net where they battle to control the world. With all the latest computer technology we have to help us in our world, this story takes it to a new level of concern. One of the more intriguing stories is *Bring them Down* by Ben Winters. The population 'hears' God telling them to cross over, but one girl doesn't hear anything and doesn't believe. She doesn't believe and refuses to accept that she should follow the majority. After everyone is gone she is left with just one friend remaining and trying to survive. Will McIntosh again frightens the heck out of me with *Dancing with Batgirl in the Land of Nod*. The image of seeing people getting sick and nodding to only end up paralyzed is completely terrifying. This is one of those stories that really sticks with you and can make you never want to leave your home for fear of contracting an illness. In *The Mountain* by Hugh Howey is a great follow up to *In the Air*. The people are hold up in a mountain with a small group while the rest of humanity left to die from a nuclear apocalypse. Being safe isn't all its cracked up to be as they soon discover, in the mountain quickly takes a turn for the worse making them wonder if a quick death wouldn't have been better.

These are only a few of the great stories contained in this book. There are many more awaiting you, ready to give you a disturbing outlook on the end of the world. I'm now again wanting the next and final piece to this literary puzzle. John Joseph Adams really knows how to pick his writers and the authors really know how to tell a great story. This is a must read trilogy, with so many great stories you can't lose.

Steve says

I didn't like this one nearly as much as the first volume in the "Triptych", and I'm not sure why. Perhaps it has been too long since I read the first book. Perhaps it was that I lost the connection with the characters from the first group of stories (several of the stories in this volume didn't even have the same main characters). Perhaps I like the intensity of knowing that some great disaster/invasion/event is coming and how people react to that pressure. Nonetheless, I ended up skimming over many of the stories here.

Hopefully, the next volume will tie everything together.

My favorites here were "Fruiting Bodies" by Seanan McGuire, "Agent Isolated" by David Wellington, and "In the Mountain" by Hugh Howey.

Emily says

Well, I have to admit that I didn't like this one as much as its predecessor, *The End is Nigh*. Some of the writers I liked couldn't make it to this one, and were replaced with writers I'm not as fond of, and some of the followups weren't as good as the first story.

The authors new to this one were Daniel H. Wilson (shakes fist, damn robot nut) and Elizabeth Bear, who puts a fun human twist in her virus story. As I mentioned in my review of the first book, Tananarive Due's "Herd Immunity" was really good, as was Seanan McGuire's "Fruiting Bodies;" I love how the character's OCD plays into the story. I think Hugh Howey's second story was better than his first. Jack Kerr's "Penance" was a lovely companion to "Wedding Day," looking at the damage done in the people that weren't left behind. Scott Sigler's "The Sixth Day of Deer Camp" really kicked it up a notch.

Jonathan Maberry, that hack, didn't do a terrible job in the first book, but missed the whole related-story memo, and decided to do a Rot and Ruin short story, about the day Tom and Benny fled home. I think it was better in quality than the book, but serious points deducted for not following the anthology's damn premise. Oh, and Jamie Ford still sucked.

All told, this was less stellar than the first book, but I'm still wildly looking forward to the third book *The End Has Come* due March 1, 2015 (and which promises the return of Paolo Bacigalupi).

Seamus says

Part 1 was better!

I would only give the following stories the 5-star treatment:

HERD IMMUNITY by Tananarive Due

THE SIXTH DAY OF DEER CAMP by Scott Sigler
GOODNIGHT STARS by Annie Bellet
AGENT ISOLATED by David Wellington
THE GODS WILL NOT BE SLAIN by Ken Liu
SUNSET HOLLOW by Jonathan Maberry
PENANCE by Jake Kerr
DANCING WITH BATGIRL IN THE LAND OF NOD by Will McIntosh
IN THE MOUNTAIN by Hugh Howey

Because of the above, I will of course buy *The End Has Come* on the day it is available!

The others, well they range from pretty good, to okay, to terrible (sorry won't name & shame)

Jane says

This is the 2nd in a series, following *The End is Nigh*. About 85% of the stories are continuations of ones found in the earlier book, but it's not necessary to have read that one first. These are all short stories dealing with the apocalypse, or the immediate aftermath.

My favorite was by one of my favorite authors, Hugh Howey. It takes place during the same time/events as *First Shift*, when nanotechnology was used against the world and the chosen went into silos in the ground. Here, a group goes into a bunker in the West, after having accidentally found a copy of *The Order*. (Wool fans will get that).

I have enjoyed both these anthologies, and look forward to the 3rd.

Nathan Burgoine says

A while back, like many Sci-Fi readers, I learned about the whole sad puppy/rabid puppy thing and hit my daily quota of bigotry. However, I did find some good things that came out of that awful situation, including that two of the authors that said bigoted group promoted asked to withdraw from consideration, rather than be associated with said slate.

Now, I believe that the moral high road in this case might very well have cost said authors some cash – the Hugo award list was something people mentioned often at the bookstore, and I know it made sales bump when the winners were announced. So it behooved me to purchase something from those authors to hopefully offset the potential negatives they'd have.

One of those authors, Annie Bellet, was on the list for her short story, "Goodnight Stars," which is included in *The End is Now* (Apocalypse Triptych Book 2). Now, I've been having a craving for apocalypse tales, and I nabbed this collection (as well as the first novel in the *Twenty-Sided Sorceress* series, because paranormal and gaming nerd!)

Uh. Where was I?

Right!

*

The End is Now (Apocalypse Triptych Book 2), edited by John Joseph Adams

There are so many ways the world can end. There are, of course, zombies – I’m really quite tired of zombies, by the way – but it’s the varied tales in this collection that really gave me pause. There is absolutely something here for everyone.

To whit:

An Earth where everyone is starting to be born “Sweet.” These people can’t handle acting in a way that harms others – no violence, no ecological impact, nothing – because when they do, their very bodies reject it and they can die. The world begins to implode between horrible victimizers and these perfect victims who can’t even fight back – and yet, can something worse be on the way?

A mold that is slowly eating everything – and everyone. The woman who help design it has already lost her wife (note: yay for diverse Sci-Fi!) and is desperate to keep her daughter alive as the stuff continues to grow and spread.

An impact shatters and destroys the moon – flinging a rain of fragments down on Earth; for a young woman who’s mother was an engineer on the moon-base, this has double the fear – did she make it off in time? Can she make it to somewhere safe herself? Is there such a place any more? (This is the story Annie Bellet wrote – it’s very good).

And, like I said, zombies, wars, economic collapses... This anthology is definitely worth a gander if you’re at all interested in the genre. Sub-genre? Sub-sub-genre? Uh, if you like apocalypses.

Tracy108 says

I really enjoy this series and these short stories - some more than others, of course. I also like the format where in 'Nigh', the stories began and in this version, 'Now', most of the stories continue.

Stephanie Manson says

I'm giving it five stars because most of the stories were well-written, well-paced, entertaining, and had great characters. There were, of course, a few I didn't enjoy quite as much.

The following stories were my favorites & really made this anthology stand out for me: Herd Immunity by Tannanarive Due; Goodnight Stars by Annie Bellet; Penance by Jake Kerr, In the Mountain by Hugh Howey, & Fruiting Bodies by Seanan McGuire.

