

NIGHT SHADE BOOKS

1423 33rd Avenue | San Francisco, CA 94122 | Phone: 415-759-8901 | Fax: 603-590-2754

CONTACT: James Foster, publicity@nightshadebooks.com

**What will life be like after
the end of the world as we know it?**

WASTELANDS

STORIES OF THE APOCALYPSE

SCHEDULED FOR A JANUARY 1, 2008 RELEASE

Famine. Death. War. Pestilence. These are said to be the harbingers of the biblical apocalypse—Armageddon, The End of The World. In science fiction, the end of the world is usually triggered by more specific means: nuclear warfare, biological disaster (or warfare), ecological/geological disaster, or cosmological disaster. But in the wake of any great cataclysm, there are survivors—and post-apocalyptic science fiction speculates what life would be like for them.

WASTELANDS (Night Shade Books trade paperback; February 19, 2008; \$15.95) gathers 22 of the finest works of post-apocalyptic fiction ever written, including fiction from the likes of Stephen King, George R. R. Martin, Jonathan Lethem, Orson Scott Card, Gene Wolfe, Octavia E. Butler, and many others.

Post-apocalyptic SF first rose to prominence in the aftermath World War II—no doubt due in large part to the world having witnessed the devastating destructive power of the atomic bomb—and reached the height of its popularity during Cold War, when the threat of worldwide nuclear annihilation seemed a very real possibility. So why the resurgence in popularity now? Is it because the political climate now is reminiscent of the climate during the Cold War? During times of war and global unease, is it that much easier to imagine a depopulated world, a world destroyed by humanity's own hand?

In **WASTELANDS**, you will find 22 different science fictional apocalyptic scenarios. Some of them are far-fetched and unlikely, while others are plausible and all-too-easy to imagine. Some of the stories flirt with the fantastic. Many venture into horrific territory. All of them explore one question: What would life be like after the end of the world as we know it?

ABOUT THE EDITOR

John Joseph Adams was born in 1976. He is the assistant editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, and was guest-editor of *Shimmer Magazine's* special pirate issue. He is also a freelance writer whose work has appeared in: *Amazing Stories*, *The Internet Review of Science Fiction*, *Kirkus Reviews*, *Locus*, *Intergalactic Medicine Show*, *Publishers Weekly*, *SCIFI.com*, *Strange Horizons*, *Subterranean Magazine*, and *Writer's Digest*. He lives in Perth Amboy, NJ.

WASTELANDS: STORIES OF THE APOCALYPSE edited by John Joseph Adams
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ADVANCE BUZZ

From *Publishers Weekly*

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.*)

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WASTELANDS reprints stories from a variety of sources—from *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* and *Asimov's Science Fiction* to *Omni* and *Realms of Fantasy*—and includes a never-before-seen story from Nebula Award-winning author Jerry Oltion. Others among the 22 stories include:

- **Hugo Award winner "Speech Sounds" by Octavia E. Butler** — A plague that severely impairs humanity's ability to communicate leaves the survivors to cope with the remnants of society when we are reduced to our basest instincts.
- **Locus Award winner "When Sysadmins Ruled the Earth" by Cory Doctorow** — Computer systems administrators huddle in their network operations centers, after a series of disasters ends civilization. If the Internet survived the apocalypse, what would the surviving techs do after the world ended?
- **World Fantasy Award finalist "The End of the Whole Mess" by Stephen King** — By eliminating humanity's thirst for violence, a brilliant scientist hopes to put an end to war.
- **Hugo & Nebula Award finalist "The People of Sand and Slag" by Paolo Bacigalupi** — In the far-future, a trio of super-warriors are guarding a mining complex when they come across a dog living in the mine's tailings fields, and have to decide what to do with it.
- **Hugo & Nebula Award finalist "Ginny Sweethips' Flying Circus" by Neal Barrett, Jr.** — Ginny Sweethips and her companions—driver/carnival barker Del and Possum Dark, who lives for the moments when he can spray hot lead across the land—make their living on the road in the wastelands selling sex, tacos, and dangerous drugs.

To interview John Joseph Adams, or for more information about **WASTELANDS**,
contact **James Foster** at publicity@nightshadebooks.com.
www.nightshadebooks.com | www.johnjosephadams.com/wastelands
