



Rise: A Newsflesh Collection

Mira Grant

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Collected here for the first time is every piece of short fiction from *New York Times* Bestseller Mira Grant's acclaimed Newsflesh series, with two new never-before-published novellas and all eight short works available for the first time in print.

We had cured cancer. We had beaten the common cold. But in doing so we created something new, something terrible that no one could stop. The infection spread, a man-made virus taking over bodies and minds, filling them with one, unstoppable command...FEED.

Countdown

"Everglades"

San Diego 2014: The Last Stand of the California Browncoats

How Green This Land, How Blue This Sea

The Day the Dead Came to Show and Tell

Please Do Not Taunt the Octopus

All the Pretty Little Horses

Coming to You Live

Rise: A Newsflesh Collection Details

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Author : Mira Grant

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From Reader Review Rise: A Newsflesh Collection for online ebook

Amanda says

4.5 stars - it took me quite awhile to get through all these stories but I'm really glad I kept going. The stories are all great but the last couple are definite 5 stars. Love this whole series.

? Kimberly says

Christine Lakin and John Glouchevitch both did an excellent job of narrating these shorts. I have previously read most of the novellas, so it took me a moment to acclimate to their voices as opposed to the ones in my head.

My name is Shaun Mason, and I am not okay

Countdown- It was fun revisiting the story and is one of my favorites. *Countdown* introduces us to Amanda Amberlee. A girl who was cured of leukemia, and the namesake for the Amberlee Virus. A virus responsible for the apocalyptic world, we find in the Newsflesh trilogy. This story also introduces us to Dr. Kellis who was responsible for stealing the untested cure. If you have been curious about the first outbreaks, this story is for you.

Everglades is a very short fiction and was originally part of the Living Dead 2 Anthology. (collection containing zombie stories) The tale is very short, but shares an outbreak on a college campus near the beginning of the outbreak. Debbie our protagonist shares what happens along with the survival lessons she learned from her Grandpa.

San Diego 2014- The Last Stand of the California Browncoats- Once you read this, you will never attend another Comic CON without thinking of this tale. You have been warned. Grant shares what happens when you have a large crowd, tight quarters, and a freakin' zombie outbreak. What could go wrong? Another personal favorites, Firefly fangirling aside.

How Green This Land, How Blue This Sea- Mahir takes us down under in this Post-Rising Australian tale. A group known as the Australian Conservation Corps has tried to preserve their continent's natural wealth by separating animals that amplify. They are gated in large enclosures that allowing them to roam free. Yeah, I see no problem with amplified elephants, kangaroos and large cats and roaming free behind a fence. Bwahaha! I have always loved Mahir and his voice and thought this tale was particularly good.

The Day the Dead Came to Show and Tell- A post rising tale featuring Elaine Oldenburg (Foxy). She is a first grade teacher at an elementary school in the northern pacific region. The school has all the latest post-rising security features including electronic shackles on student's desks and amplification test to keep your precious children safe. Yeah, what could go wrong? This was dark, terrifying and brilliant. Grant did an excellent job of mixing zombies and children.

Please Do Not Taunt the Octopus Spend time with Dr. Shannon Abbey as she runs an underground virology lab in this post-rising tale. Fans who love getting stories about side characters will appreciate this short. When a mysterious woman shows up Dr. Abbey investigates and oh boy! Not to be missed folks! On a side note, I friggin love the titles Grant comes up with for these short stories.

All The Pretty Little Horses- (Brand New story) Here fans get to meet Georgia and Shaun's adoptive parents. We finally get the full story behind their loss during the initial outbreak and the months following.

Told through Michael's eyes Grant brilliantly captured Stacy's struggles and reawakening. I thoroughly enjoyed this one.

Coming to You Live- (Brand New Story) Oh the mixed feelings, I have for this one. *Coming to You Live* shares an epilogue of sorts involving Shaun and Georgia. Grant never planned to write this, but fans wanted it. I say, trust your gut Ms. Grant. I have imagined their epilogue many times, revisiting them in my thoughts and pondering what they were doing. I never imagined Grant would tell us. Let us just say things did not end well in *Coming to You Live*. Read/listen at your own risk. I could not stop listening and admittedly hung on every word. After all, it is Grant and her writing rocks. In retrospect, I am of the opinion some doors are best left unopened.

Audio provided by publisher. This review was originally posted on Caffeinated Book Reviewer

Anelis says

Since this is a collection of short stories I'll write my thoughts separately for each one.

1. Countdown

(Pre-rising)

How everything began. Normally, this would be the beginning of a zombie movie. We learn exactly how the virus was formed and spread. Interesting and exciting. I remember when I first read it I was annoyed with the olde trope of "damn hippies go and free the monkeys and everything turns to shit". I still am tired of it.

2.Everglades

(Pre-rising)

It was so short I barely remember it. It had memories of a grandpa and alligators. Not bad.

3.San Diego 2014

(Pre-rising)

Good old geek fun. Is also good as a standalone story. Zombies at ComiCon, full with cosplay and shit. Yeah!

4.How Green This Land How Blue This Sea

(Post-rising)

Mahir goes to Australia and sees zombie kangaroos. Interesting ideas - Australian security is very different - which is nice since we (at least we as Europeans) always criticize american media's use of fear on their citizens. Nice to see Mira taking this approach.

5.The Day The Dead Came To Show And Tell

(Post-rising)

How cool is this title? Even if it's a lie, because it wasn't "show and tell" day. At first I was a bit annoyed with the emotional milking of the tragedy that is when kids die. The story is so fast paced though, and filled with excitement and agony, that I quickly forgot about it. Did not care for the protagonist before reading this, now I do.

6.Please Do Not Taunt the Octopus

(Post-rising)

Meh. Companion to the previous story. I enjoyed the action scenes but not much else. Very little octopus also.

7. All the Pretty Little Horses

(Pre-Post-rising)

A story exclusive to this volume. Where we learn all about the Masons. Grant wrote them as total monsters for the duration of the Newsflesh series, and now we get to learn why they became that way. Couldn't care less really. Got the chills however at the last chapter, when they decide to adopt.

8. Coming To You Live

(Post-rising)

Also a story exclusive to this volume. An epilogue of what happened to the protagonists. I did not need this. The whole feeling of the story was much darker than that of the books. Reminded me of novels like *The Road*, and movies like *Winter's Bone*. Alone in a wasteland, post-apocalypse type of thing. Could have done without. Wasn't bad though.

Devann says

I had been avoiding reading this for ages because, while I like Newsflesh, I generally hate zombie fiction as a whole and was worried that reading about characters other than George and Shaun would kind of ruin the experience for me. As always, I should have just trusted Seanan because she uses these stories to take a lot of minor characters from the main series and make me love them just as much as everyone else! There also is one story at the end following up with George and Shaun's story. Ominously the introduction states only 'this is what you asked for', but it was actually a really great story and I just missed them so much. If you've read the other Newsflesh books and were on the fence about this one I would definitely recommend it.

Christina (A Reader of Fictions) says

Despite my immense love of Mira Grant's Newsflesh trilogy, I'd not yet gotten around to reading the various novellas. I was definitely planning to, sooner rather than later, so I was **THRILLED** when *Rise* was announced. At that point, I decided to wait, even though I was actively rereading at about that time. I mean, new stories and the old stories all conveniently together in one whole book? **SIGN ME UP.**

Countdown

Rise opens strongly with *Countdown*. "Countdown" details *The Rising* in small snippets, from the creation of the cures that accidentally merged to cause it and the first attacks. Though the information wasn't precisely new, there's a lot more detail given to the bigger picture details that you get in the trilogy. Grant does an amazing job with these. Despite the brevity of each snippet, they're powerful and intense. I have a lot of Dr. and Mr. Kellis feels.

The steady undercurrent of "Countdown" is the constant shifting of blame. Many events combine to bring about *The Rising*, and no one wants to be culpable. It's sad, really, that the people who feel guiltiest about the apocalypse are the ones who were least culpable.

Also powerful are the news snippets at the end of each chapter. They remain cheerful for so long, shifting only when the dead are actually rising, becoming a menacing drumbeat warning people to stay safe and stay inside. Grant has always done amazing things with epigraphs.

Everglades

“Everglades” is a sort of new work, never having been released as a novella until Rise. And oof is it depressing. Trigger warning for suicide, as this story is about a girl who decides she doesn’t care to try so survive the zombie apocalypse. Though it’s well-written, “Everglades” was a bit too short to have much impact on me, aside from being depressing as hell. The zombies reminding the girl of the Everglades also was a bit of a weird connection that didn’t do a whole lot for me tbh.

San Diego 2014: The Last Stand of the California Browncoats

Oof, this one hurts. The Newsflesh Trilogy has some intense, scary zombie moments, but, since it’s set after humanity has figured out how to survive, it’s nothing like this. Set at the very start of the Rising, “San Diego 2014: The Last Stand of the California Browncoats” is the story of how everyone at the Comic Con preview dies.

Like, you know from the start that no one will survive. And of course all the saddest moments from Firefly are playing in my head as I read. The combination of how likable Grant made these poor, doomed characters and Firefly feels had me crying at the end. It’s sort of amazing how, even though I know there’s no hope, you still really do hope. THE PAIN.

How Green This Land, How Blue This Sea

My feelings on “How Green This Land, How Blue This Sea” are a bit mixed. On the one hand, I really love getting to see how hilariously uniquely Australia handled the Rising. I’d not really thought about how other countries would be handling things in different ways, but now I really want more stories set in other places. The commentary on Australia seems pretty on point from everything I’ve heard (though I’ve never been).

On the other hand, this story did drag a bit. As much as I love Mahir, he’s too tired to be too bantery for most of the story due to jetlag. It’s not really plot-driven either, more about the science and looking at zombie kangaroos than anything. For what this novella actually accomplishes, it’s overlong. But zombie kangaroos and wombats are pretty damn cool.

The Day the Dead Came to Show and Tell

Wow, this one’s really strong. Like, “How Green This Land, How Blue This Sea,” it’s long, almost a hundred pages in this huge hardback. Unlike the prior novella, though, the pace is fast. Where that story lacked in high stakes, this one was high stakes in novella form. It’s about an elementary school suffering an outbreak. Unlike “San Diego 2014,” you know some people are going to survive. Very cool. Very painful. Massively brutal. (view spoiler) Also, it’s very zombie horror in a way that Newsflesh generally isn’t, if you’re into that sort of thing.

Please Do Not Taunt the Octopus

Thus far, “Please Do Not Taunt the Octopus” was my least favorite in the collection, being both long and the one I felt least connected to. The end picks up, but the first several sections are slow. The constant riffing on

“mad science” also got really old. Also, this short story further enhanced my frustration with Parasitology because Dr. Shannon Abbey is basically Dr. Shanti Cale and Foxy is Tansy. It’s not a bad novella, but I don’t think it shines as much as the others have.

All the Pretty Little Horses

Woo! I’ve made it to the new stories, written for this collection. I’m not really sure why I’m more excited for these when I hadn’t read any of them before but whatever they feel special. In “All the Pretty Little Horses,” Grant takes us on a deep dive into the Masons in a post-Rising world. The story does make them a bit more sympathetic for sure, and adds some great characterization for them. On the other hand, Michael Mason does not have the most compelling of voices. The Masons are not particularly funny or sarcastic, so I do not love the writing in their section as much as in other stories. Ironically, this does speak to the quality of the voice, but it is not my favorite.

Coming to You Live

“This is what you asked for.” So says Grant’s Introduction. Well, to be entirely fair, we asked for fan fiction fluff of certain people being spectacularly happy. Shockingly, Grant did not deliver that. I admit to being a bit grumpy that “Coming to You Live” was not that, but seeing these guys again means a lot. I love that Shaun’s still completely fucked up, and I love that he finally feels okay enough to try to get help. <3

As a whole, this collection contains some of the best novellas I’ve read. They’re not essential to the Newsflesh Trilogy experience, but there’s some really amazing background and some great peeks into the future. It’s not all sunshine and rainbows, but who would ever really expect that of Grant?

Kristalia says

So here is a short list so I remember before reading this which stories I have read.

Countdown

"Everglades"

~~San Diego 2014: The Last Stand of the California Browncoats~~

~~How Green This Land, How Blue This Sea~~

The Day the Dead Came to Show and Tell

Please Do Not Taunt the Octopus

All the Pretty Little Horses

Coming to You Live

So basically. Almost everything. And I have book 4 to read too. Oh joy!
I need to sort out my priorities and this is high on the list

Bonnie says

Being back in the Newsflesh world after so. long. had me all sorts of giddy. Sure, I’ve read some of these short stories recently, but the best thing about this collection of short stories is the expectation of more to come. Feedback is coming this October and this is the perfect book to read to get a bit of a refresh and to

prepare yourself mentally. More George. More Shaun. More zombies. Oh, man, is it October yet?

So, back to *Rise: A Newsflesh Collection*. This collection consists of eight short stories and two of them have never before been published. These are all set in the Newsflesh world but not necessarily George and Shaun's world (although a few of course do).

The first, *Countdown*, is a must-read for fans of the Newsflesh novels. *Countdown* takes you back before the virus was spread, before the zombies came alive, when the world was still as vivid and vibrant as it is today. This is a super short story and left me wanting much much more, but it was still an extremely informative piece of writing that I felt was essential to truly understanding the Newsflesh world. You don't get to read anything about Shaun or George or even Buffy, but you do get a glimpse into the life of Amanda Amberlee, the creator of the cure Dr. Alexander Kellis, and of the group responsible for unleashing it onto the world, 'The Mayday Army'. Even with a short story, Mira Grant does a phenomenal job at pulling you right in.

'When will you Rise?

And the world gave itself an answer:

Now.

Welcome to the aftermath.'

Everglades was a short story that was originally included in *The Living Dead 2* anthology. Set on the UC Berkeley campus, this is a story that focuses on the sorts of individuals that have found themselves a survivor among the growing apocalypse but realized that this sort of world isn't one that they can continue living in. This short story effectively recaps the life of Debbie whose grandfather taught her to respect Nature, that it can be cruel. This life lesson is never more apparent as she watches the dead come to life and the air begins to smell like the Everglade swamps of Florida. Life is only temporary but death is eternal. Incredibly eerie story. Makes you wonder what form you would take in an apocalypse: hero or someone more expendable?

San Diego 2014: The Last Stand of the California Browncoats tells the story of individuals that found themselves in a comic book convention when the zombies begin to rise. Thirty years have passed since the Last Stand and Mahir Gowda interviews the only survivor Lorelei Tutt. This short story encompasses a large cast of characters and we get to see snippets through their eyes and what they're doing to try to survive the long five days they were barricaded inside the convention center. Last Stand was a Hugo nominee for Best Novella in 2013 and it really comes as no surprise. This nod to the Browncoats of *Firefly* is yet another brilliant story that brings to light the realities of just how terrifying a zombie apocalypse would be.

In *How Green This Land, How Blue This Sea*, we get more Mahir but this time he's in Australia doing an article on their famed rabbit-proof fence. It's an interesting piece that reads very much like a travelogue, as if Bill Bryson visited Australia except there's zombie kangaroo hopping around. It was interesting to get a glimpse at how people outside of the United States have handled the zombie apocalypse. There's a definite lack of action with this one, Mahir never was the type to get out there and slay some undead, so this one is definitely for those interested in the scientific aspects of an apocalypse.

The Day the Dead Came to Show and Tell is a riveting and suspenseful novella set in the same world as Grant's popular Newsflesh trilogy. The story follows Alaric Kwong and Mahir Gowda in current day 2044 who are conducting research on the tragedy trying to find the cause of it all. Flashbacks to 2036 are told from the point of view of teacher Elaine Oldenburg and shows the flaws of the 'secure school system' she thought she worked in. Her desperation to survive and to keep as many of the children safe as possible is palpable

and even knowing that all sorts of wrongs are likely to follow, the reader can't help but hope for a miracle. Incredibly thrilling for a mere 112 pages, Mira Grant continues to impress with her boldness.

Please Do Not Taunt the Octopus centers are my favorite character: Dr. Abbey. Most of these short stories can stand by themselves but *Octopus* combines not just the story from *Blackout* but *The Day the Dead Came to Show and Tell* and guys? It's so damn good. Dr. Abbey is being her badass scientist self trying to figure out how to save the world from the virus that overtook it, but she also has to protect her lab from those who want to take it from her. There were some fantastic character revelations and added backstory to those interesting characters that we never quite knew much about. Bottom line, if you haven't read this, do it immediately.

And now we come to the brand new stories! *All the Pretty Little Horses* was admittedly a massive step back in terms of pacing after the thrill ride of *Octopus* but I can't complain too awful much. We also took a bit of a step back in terms of time as well. Georgia and Shaun have always been center-stage and we never quite knew much about their adoptive parents, at least until now. Stacy and Michael Mason, we know from the *Newsflesh* novels, lost their son Phillip after the family dog amplified. Stacy, lost inside her deep depression after being the one to have to put a bullet in his head, pulls herself out when she develops a passion for photography. The duo are one of the first to start blogging of the epidemic and photographing it for those too scared to venture out into the unknown. It was interesting to finally get some backstory on these characters we've always known but never knew much about.

The final story, *Coming to You Live*, is clearly leading up to events to come in *Feedback* and if I wasn't excited before I sure am now. This story takes us into the backwoods of Canada, where Georgia and Shaun have been living since the end of *Blackout*. Honestly, I don't want to spoil a single thing about this but I will say that it was so damn good to have those two back on the page. This one was intense and a bit of a nail-biter at times but such a satisfying read. I may not have wanted this one to end but it was still fantastic no matter the size and I'm not sure if I've mentioned *Feedback* but I'm even more excited for it now. *Feedback*, the fourth *Newsflesh* novel, comes out in October. But seriously, is it October yet?

I received this book free from the Publisher in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

Danielle says

The part of my chest where my heart used to be hurts.

Carey Gibbons says

I like these stories a lot more than the actual *Newsflesh* series. I think side stories are always more interesting than the main plot.

I kind of struggled though with my stars. Mira Grant/Sean McGuire gets eleventy billion stars for world building always. But I really dislike a lot of her female characters. They're all super genius types with massive chips on their shoulders and affected personality traits. That gets tiring. Also, I only skimmed the last story because I'm more than a little squicked out by Shaun and Georgia's relationship.

Overall though, I devoured this book. It was what I needed right now.

Sunil says

Rise collects all of the *Newsflesh* novellas (and one short story) in one beautiful place, AND gives us two new novellas! Which is what this review will focus on, since I have reviewed all the other novellas: *Countdown* , *San Diego 2014: The Last Stand of the California Browncoats* , *How Green This Land*, *How Blue This Sea* , *The Day the Dead Came to Show and Tell* , and *Please Do Not Taunt the Octopus* .

(I did re-read "Everglades," having read it years ago, and it remains Not My Jam storywise, though it's very moody.)

Oh, with this collection you get lots of fun introductions! The introductions are worth reading.

Anyway, the two new novellas are cleverly chosen/written, as one is pre-series and one is post-series, and each one focuses on (view spoiler)

"All the Pretty Little Horses" finally gives us the Michael and Stacy Mason backstory that's only been hinted at before, as a husband does his best to give the wife who was forced to shoot their son some form of redemption, no matter how much she denies herself forgiveness. It's poignant as hell because we see Stacy through Michael's eyes and we feel almost as helpless as he does, yet find just as much hope in every little smile, every small step toward happiness she makes, that they make together. All of this happens in a zombie-infested Bay Area, of course, which means that at any moment a rescue mission could turn into survival horror. It's a touching portrayal of a marriage healing itself, and I love how it explains so much about who they are, who they became, what Shaun and Georgia meant to them, and how Shaun and Georgia became who *they* were because of their parents.

"Coming to You Live" finally gives us the (view spoiler) that Seanan never intended to write but here it is. As you might expect, things do not go well. I don't want to hint at anything regarding this one, but I found it both harrowing and satisfying: Seanan manages to make us both regret asking for this and be thankful we got it.

Rise is a great collection, though I don't know if non-*Newsflesh* fans will pick it up. Apart from the first few novellas, the novellas are much better appreciated with knowledge of the series and its characters, and the last novella is, of course, spoilery as all hell. But as a showcase for Mira Grant's writing, character work, and worldbuilding? Goddamn.

Kimberley doruyter says

holy crap was this a long book, but so worth it.

if you didn't see the brilliance of mira grant's writing before you will after this.

countdown was the missing piece most people will want to read.

everglades shows how some people just can't find a reason to keep living.

she also takes readers too comic-con and down under.

it fills in alot of missing little pieces and extra bits of awesome.

karen says

full story-by-story review completed!

Countdown

it was good to revisit this story, like seeing an old friend. i'd read it so many years ago, but i still remembered all of it, which is a testament to the staying power of mira grant's imagery. and also her many wonderful turns of phrase:

Berkeley, being a university town in Northern California, had two major problems: not enough guns, and too many idiots who thought they could fight off zombies with medieval weapons they'd stolen from the history department. It also had two major advantages: most of the roads were already half blocked to prevent campus traffic from disturbing the residents, and most of those residents were slightly insane by any normal societal measurement.

considering that a replica of a medieval weapon is later used, to great effect, in a different newsflesh story, the idiocy seems instead to be just good thinking. (you calling kelly nakata an idiot, ms. grant?? hmmm, are ya??) but in the world of newsflesh, it's true that a little insanity will always serve you well, amiright, foxy??

and now for the chills:

"Oggie?"

kills me every time.

Everglades

this one was a first-time read for me, and i'd always felt a bit of a hole in my life for not having read it, as it was the *only* one i hadn't read. and now i have. it's very... short. it didn't leave much of an impression on me, although i really appreciated her introduction in which she discusses her inspiration for writing this one, when asked to contribute a story to The Living Dead 2 and being at a loss about what to write, feeling like she'd covered so many angles in previous zombie tales (little did she know how fruitful she would find this world in the future - how much unexplored territory, because she's *always* finding one more dark corner to shine an undead light into)

*...I was stumped. Because I needed a short story that said something new and interesting about the zombie apocalypse, and I wasn't finding it. Everyone had unleashed the virus; everyone had devoured the world. Everyone had **survived***

That was the key. Everyone had survived. What about the people who looked at the face of the changing world - the world that was never going to be the same, even if they made it out the other side - and decided to say "you know what, thanks but no thanks; I'd rather be a statistic"? Any disaster is going to come with a certain soft cost: A certain number of suicides and accidents surrounding the deaths that come as an immediate consequence of the event. I wanted to focus on one of those people.

San Diego 2014: The Last Stand of the California Browncoats

i loved this one the first time i read it, and i loved it EVEN MORE this second time. it's just a perfect story, and a love letter to fandom/geekdom in all its manifestations. first of all, the premise of a zombie outbreak at comic-con is genius. while i've never been to comic-con, i *have* been to many years of BEA and one ALA, and it's the same kind of crowd, with - sadly - fewer costumes. but just the wall-to-wall *people* - it's a recipe for disaster, if the zombies decide to visit. from the introduction:

The closest comparison I have to trying to move across the San Diego Comic-Con floor on a Saturday afternoon is trying to cut through Times Square on New Year's Eve, or across the plaza in front of Cinderella's Castle at Disney World just before the fireworks show. If you have ever done any of these things, I'm sorry. If you haven't, well, I have done all three of them, which means you don't have to.

she knows this world so well. just like elle riley, star of *Space Crime Continuum*, whose sudden superstardom has kept her from being a mere attendee, although she'd love to be just a regular geek again, wide-eyed and not needing to keep any secrets from the media's scrutiny. elle is the best - i love her so much.

*"Nice to meet you all," said Elle briskly. "Now, what sort of danger did you people lead to our door?" She realized she was falling into the speech patterns she used for Indiction Rivers - and well, so what if she was? Indy Rivers got things **done**. Maybe she was a fictional character, but they were in a fictional place, in a fictional situation. There were worse things to be than fictional.*

Fictional people cried only when the story told them to.

and her email is such a heartpunch.

because that's another spectacular thing about this story - you know right from the beginning that NO ONE made it out of comic-con alive. which is fine - you're reading this interview between mahir and lorelei tuttle - a woman who was the last to leave the convention center before all hell broke loose, and you're just absorbing it as a fact - 'yup, everyone died, got it.' but then... then you actually *meet* about twenty or so characters, on this - their last day. and it's really affecting, because you are rooting for these brave, nerdy folk even though you KNOW it's pointless.

there's also another great dog here. so many excellent dogs in these stories. but don't get attached! you were warned!

How Green This Land, How Blue This Sea

i love how much mira grant's voice reminds me of jenny lawson at times. for instance, one of the chapters in this story is titled:

Small Planes, Large Fences, and a Rather Daunting Number of Zombie Kangaroos, Because That Is Exactly What This Day Needed

and another:

In Which There Are Kangaroos Absolutely Everywhere, and No One Is Properly Upset About the Situation

after reading about lawson's trip to australia in *Furiously Happy: A Funny Book About Horrible Things*, i kind of want to fan-pimp these two into being best friends. BE BEST FRIENDS, PLEASE!

i'm going to be lazy and requote what i quoted from the first time i reviewed this story, because it still makes me laugh:

Video footage of zombie kangaroos laying siege to Sydney was one of the last things to escape Australia during that first long, brutal summer of the Rising. Then the networks went down, and there were other things for people to worry about. Unbelievable as it sounds today, there was a time when the rest of the world genuinely expected the entire continent to be lost.

There was one thing that no one considered, however: Australia was populated by Australians. When the rest of us were trying to adapt to a world that suddenly seemed bent on eradicating the human race, the Australians had been dealing with a hostile environment for centuries. They looked upon our zombie apocalypse, and they were not impressed.

AND i'm going to repost the zombie kangaroo image:

AND i'm going to complain again that by not referring to zombified wombats as "zombats," she really missed an opportunity here. jenny lawson would not have missed that opportunity.

but i have NEW reflections! that are NEW!

the first time i read this one, i freaking loved it, and i could not understand why so many of the gr reviews were thumbs-downing it. but this time around, i loved it less. and it may be a case of having read it the first time when there was a newflesh-shaped absence in my life as opposed to reading it now, with 644 pages of newflesh to roll around in.

because yeah, the thumbs-downers were right - mahir really did drink a lot of tea in this story. which sounds like a silly thing to complain about, but mahir is one of my favorites (beaten only by alaric) (okay, and obviously foxy) (okay never mind - but i like him a LOT, okay?) and he kind of does come across a bit cartoonish in this one which OH MY GOD - BEST IDEA EVER - can we have some funkopop vinyls made of the newflesh series? they should totally do book-funkos. i would buy so many of them. someone make this a thing that exists.

The Day the Dead Came to Show and Tell

okay, so here's the thing. i read this way back when, and there was no introduction by mira grant and when the reveal of the story was revealed, i was stunned. my jaw, it dropped.

in this collection, she reveals the reveal in her introduction, which i am quoting part of because it is a perfect description, but shhhhh:

(view spoiler)

so did i, man, so did i...

so i would caution you to maybe read the story first and then go back for the introduction, to maximize jaw-droppingness. and i realize JUST now, clicking through to my own old review of this, i fucking revealed it in my review, too. which is something i'm usually so careful to avoid, despite what some people on the internet would have you believe.

whatever, i give up.

it's a fantastic story, whether you are surprised by the twist or not. so much action, so much peril, so much squirming on my part as i wonder how anyone can even live in the newsflesh world when this stupid virus can be transmitted by such a minor incident as the one shown here. she's always so forthcoming and generous with her science, which is something i really appreciate, even in those instances when i am completely confused. (view spoiler) but here - it's so horrifying - how it escalates into what it does in such a snowballing way from such a tiny moment. and it's like HOW CAN YOU EVEN AVOID THIS SHIT??? especially when you take into account "spontaneous amplification," which is like, just give up now, man, and makes me understand the decisions made in that *Everglades* story a whole hell of a lot. but yeah, i love this one. if the comic-con story didn't exist, this would be my clear fave.

it's another spectacular locked-room setting, and it's so freaking intense.

and this horribly heartbreaking passage:

*Then there was nothing but teeth, and pain, and redness, and the dim, disappointed feeling that there should have been more than this; that **she** should have been more than this, somehow. Only she wasn't.*

reminded me of one of my favorite parts of This is Not a Test, where a young character mourns the likely end of his life in his own zombie-infested world, and how small it has been.

"...It's nothing. I thought it could be something, I mean, eventually." He finally looks at us. "My life. I thought - but I mean...it's nothing."

how absolutely shattering to realize, at fifteen, that you have no fucking hope of realizing any of your dreams. this one is younger, so i guess *more* tragic, but still, that realization kills me.

Please Do Not Taunt the Octopus

"I was a doctor before I became anything else. The first rule we were taught in medical school was 'Do no harm.'"

That wasn't quite true. The first rule we were taught in medical school was "A cadaver is not a toy."

dr. abbey is my LOVE. and her dog. damn, i love that dog. and the wonderful meeting between dog and ... someone else that occurs in this book. this book shines with dr abbey's cranky/funny/badass voice, and can we have a round of applause for SUPER-FORTRESS???

Give me a group of easily bored scientists and engineers, and give me a couple of undisturbed years, and I can build a stronghold that will never be breached.

great story.

All the Pretty Little Horses

this greeting, from the introduction, delighted me even though it did not apply to me:

This is the first of the two new stories in this volume. The odds are good that many of you have skipped straight here. Welcome.

me, i wasn't going to race right to the new stuff. i wanted to savor the old familiar ones and then celebrate with all-new adventures at the end, otherwise i would never have gone back and read the earlier ones again. plus i would feel like i was cheating on my reading challenge, plus,-plus who wants to have a book with an uneven wear-pattern, pristine until the last hundred pages? not me, that's for sure! these things matter!

anyway, this story covers the experiences of the mason parents, post-philip, pre-shaun and george and is a pretty excellent examination of coping mechanisms and survival and how people can start out nice and well-intentioned and fragile and eventually turn into ... shaun and george's parents. apology? explanation? warning? whatever - it's really tight and ALL NEW!

Coming to You Live

the introduction reads simply: *This is what you asked for.*

as far as a way to close a collection, it's perfect. it's basically a curtain call, one of the segments is even called *The Gang's All Here*. however, it was my least favorite story overall. it takes place after the events of Blackout, and it answers the question "where are they and what are they doing now?" and you know who 'they' are, yes?

My name is Shaun Mason, and I am not okay.

there was a lot i liked in this one, including a little passage about foxes:

*I liked foxes. They kept the vermin down, and since they never reached amplification weight, they couldn't become zombies, which made them decent neighbors. Best of all, they **hated** the smell of the infected, and they liked to yell at infected things. When foxes yelled at something, it sounded like a murder party getting underway. As biological early warning systems went, you couldn't do much better than foxes.*

but i think i'm sick of shaun's voice/perspective. i used to really enjoy his character, but either i'm over him or she's out of practice writing him. it was really one-note: george, george, george, burn down the world etc etc. it felt all too familiar. however, once more characters start popping their heads into the story, it got better, but in a "hey, look who's here!" way and not a "this story is very engaging to me" way. so that was a bit of a disappointment, although i'll take all the alaric i can get. to be honest, george was always the least interesting character to me, and this story is very very george-y. even foxy was dull in this one. and since i still can't wrap my head around some of the science related to this series, as i mentioned in the spoiler earlier, a lot of this was over my muddled little head.

but whatever- it's new and i got to see some favorite characters interacting (or rather, sniping at each other with hurt feelings). i think my problem with this one was the same as with mahir in the australia one - it was a lot of knee-jerk tics and quirks, all very expected, a parade of characteristics of familiar characters where all the new stuff was george-stuff i didn't really care about. but i'm not going to complain - i loved reading this book, the new and the old and i am SO PUMPED for the new full-length novel.

bring it on!

NOW AVAILABLE!!! and i'm on the very last story. sniff.

i just got an ARC of this in the mail, and while i was excited to finally have all the stories i'd read as e-books in one handy volume, i had no idea that there were actually TWO BRAND-NEW STORIES in it!

life is good.

okay, i am (re)reading this now. i've read all but the two new stories and the one that was only in Zombies 2, which i'm pretty sure i have around here somewhere, since i read the first volume, but i think i just never realized hers was in there. moops. i'm not sure if i should re-review the ones i've already read, but for now, i will just leave links to my previous reviews, because why not?

Countdown

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

Everglades

this is the one from the zombie anthology

San Diego 2014: The Last Stand of the California Browncoats

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

How Green This Land, How Blue This Sea

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

The Day the Dead Came to Show and Tell

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

Please Do Not Taunt the Octopus

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

All the Pretty Little Horses

Coming to You Live

and there's also **Fed**, which i think was on her site maybe? but it's not in this collection. which is weird. but anyway, here, because i like to be complete and thorough:

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

and while i'm here, i may as well link to the reviews for the three novels in the trilogy:

Feed - <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

Deadline - <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

Blackout - <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

Keikii Eats Books says

Average rating: 78 points/100 (4/5 stars)

Rise is a collection of all the novellas and a short story written in the Newsflesh series. Most were published as standalones prior to their entry into this collection. While none of these are strictly necessary to read, some of them are quite worth the read anyway.

Countdown

77 points/100 (4 stars/5)

Daniel Wells has been working on the Marburg-Amberlee treatment to cure cancer. Alexander Kellis is working on a cure for the common cold, but before he could test it, a news article comes out lying about his intentions and a group decide to steal and release it. The CDC has been tracking the spread of Kellis's cure, and they are terrified. But, what's the worst that could happen?

I really enjoyed this novella. I think I like Outbreak stories the least of all the zombie story types. Yet, this one was really good. Maybe it is because I had heard the tale before, in bits and pieces, as Shaun and Georgia tell it to us, and I wanted to know more. Maybe it is because of the way it is presented. All I know is I did not want to set this down.

This story is presented to us in a way that keeps hope alive, though every one of the readers of this novella knows the outcome. It starts out like today is any other day, before everything goes wrong. A single lie, one almost anyone could make. One death, a death hundreds every day encounter, unavoidable. And then. Then the fear, then the panic.

Yet this isn't just what we have been told before. I can't tell if I was an inattentive reader before, or some of the facts changed. There was new stuff, too. How the cure for the cold reacted to different things, not just Marburg-Amberlee. We also see the Masons, before anything was even confirmed. Before the worst had happened.

Everglades

58 points/100 (3 stars/5)

Debbie is a student in California and the Rising is here. Professor Mason is calling out zombie movements. All she can do is wait.

This is a very, very short tale, strictly unnecessary to read. It is mostly a scared young woman being glad that her grandparents are no longer alive to see the rising.

San Diego 2014: The Last Stand of the California Browncoats

63 points/100 (3.25 stars/5)

It is 2014, there have been reports of Zombies, but nothing has been confirmed yet. No one knows what is going on. Yet, it is San Diego Comic Con, and Lorelei Tutt is being forced by her parents to come with. She is the only survivor of the 2014 San Diego Comic Con. This is their tale.

This was interesting, but I could have done with less fan service. Technically, this is a story being told after the events of the Newsflesh trilogy, about events that happened during the rising. It is nearly completely spoiler free for the trilogy, though, and you should feel free to read this prior to it if you wish.

This is basically a love letter to the Comic Con. If you take out all the fanservice, this is a pretty basic tale of "everyone gets trapped in a building with no way out and the zombies have come" story. The interesting part is that we're talking to the only survivor as she recounts the worst event in her life, 30 years after it happened.

How Green This Land, How Blue This Sea

68 points/100 (3.5 stars/5)

Mahir Gowda travels to Australia to check out their rabbit proofing fence, where they shoved all the dangerous animals after the Rising.

If there is one thing I know about Seanan, it is that she really, really likes weird creatures. Australia is the perfect hunting ground for her to show off this love. Prepare yourself for a lot of "everything in Australia can kill you, even the zombies!" jokes. Maybe the zombies are less dangerous than the wildlife, even.

This was pretty interesting because it showcases just how deeply into the fear America, and the rest of the world, has fallen since the Rising. Australia has sensible measures, and they're just as well off, maybe more so. There aren't a hundred blood tests a day, there aren't armed guards everywhere. It is people, living with their new world, instead of away from it.

This also continues the tale of Reservoir Conditions. This isn't strictly a fun little tale of someone from a deeply scared country going to a more sensible country. It is continuing the news that they released in Blackout.

The Day the Dead Came to Show and Tell

95 points/100 (5 STARS/5)

Elaine Oldenberg is a 1st grade teacher. When an outbreak occurs at her school, she does everything in her power to save her students.

Jesus fucking christ, Seanan.

I need a drink.

And to never, ever read this novella again.

I'm so glad I don't have kids.

If there is one story I would say to read in this entire series, it would be this novella.

Christ.

Please Do Not Taunt the Octopus

89 points/100 (4.5 stars/5)

Dr. Shannon Abbey runs an illegal lab, and one day some woman shows up asking for her help. Only problem is, no one is quite certain who she is or why she came, other than to be drugged into oblivion.

Well, I enjoyed this story a hell of a lot. I wasn't expecting to be horrified all over again, but it happened as well. I wasn't certain what to expect out of Dr. Abbey, honestly, but it wasn't this. I always really liked her, she was fun and strong. Being inside her head just was really a special treat. Plus it was fun in its randomness. Even though it made the bottom drop out of my stomach when I realised what was going on.

All the Pretty Little Horses

81 points/100 (4.25 stars/5)

Michael Mason has to find some way to get his wife, Stacy's, mind off the death of their child. He pulled some strings, and now they're going with to clean out the Zoo. And after that? We'll see.

This really manages to humanise the Masons. We know what they're like in the trilogy, cold, callous, only caring about ratings. Here is how they got that way. This comes before the series even starts, and there are no spoilers for it. It is still best read after you have completed the trilogy. I enjoyed reading this, even if I still hate them.

Coming to You Live

92 points/100 (4.75 stars/5)

Shaun and Georgia Mason are back, living at the Canadian border, when things start to go wrong.

My insatiable hunger for more of the Masons was only fueled by this story, not calmed. Probably because I hoped for a nice, comforting story, and this wasn't any of those. Still amazing though. Did you know you can taste your heart in your throat? I do, now. I just wanted to see their happily ever after. In the end though, I loved this.

See more reviews in this series and others at [keikii eats books](#).

Carrie (brightbeautifulthings) says

I started the Newsflesh series in October last year, and it's taken me almost a year to finish it and all its extended content (not counting "Fed", the alternate ending for Feed, which is lurking somewhere in my Kindle files, possibly never to be seen again). As soon as I picked up Rise, I remembered why I had put it off for so long. It's 800 pages of novellas and short stories (though mostly novellas), the Les Misérables of zombie fiction, except unlike Les Mis, I'm not taking the entire year to read it. Maybe that was a mistake? Stay tuned for more. There are spoilers ahead for Feed, Deadline, and Blackout ahead.

Rise is a collection of novellas and short stories set in the Newsflesh universe, some decades after the zombie virus known as Kellis-Amberlee was released, infecting every person and most large mammals on the planet

and causing the dead to rise. The stories span from pre-Newsflesh during the zombie uprising itself to post-Newsflesh where familiar characters like Dr. Shannon Abbey, Mahir Gowda, and Georgia and Shaun Mason are still fighting for the truth.

It absolutely was a mistake. If you're going to tackle this collection, do it with more wisdom than I did. Give yourself plenty of time and consider taking breaks to read something else in between stories. "Stories" is really too light a word for them, since most span well over a hundred pages. Rise is clearly a labor of love, but 800 pages is a heavy demand to put on even the most dedicated readers. I love the Newsflesh series, and I loved some of these stories more than others, but I wish I would have approached it differently. (What makes me think I can pound an 800 page novel in a week? Hubris, partly. Insanity, possibly. Sheer lack of foresight, likely.)

I'm typically not a fan of prequels, so the stories that take place during the initial zombie uprising (called the Rising) didn't so much work for me. This includes "Everglades", "San Diego 2014: The Last Stand of the California Browncoats", and "Countdown", which loosely follows some of the events of Stacy and Michael Mason as well as the people who gave their names to the Kellis-Amberlee virus. They're all low on character and plot, but what's worse is the grim sort of fatalism to them. We already know what happened during the Rising, and there aren't a lot of happy endings to that story. I enjoyed the various character cameos from the series, as many of the stories are framed by After The End Times staff reporting on those events, but that was about it.

"All The Pretty Little Horses" more closely follows Stacy and Michael and their decision to adopt. While there was more plot and character development to be had, it didn't make me like them more. The timeline moves back to post-Newsflesh in "How Green This Land, How Blue The Sea". I enjoyed seeing a story from Mahir's perspective, since he's one of my favorites in the series, but again, it's short on plot. While the terrifying megafauna of Australia is rendered even more terrifying by Kellis-Amberlee, zombie kangaroos and wombats aren't quite enough to hold the story.

Fortunately, the second half of the collection is a lot stronger than the first. Things start to get interesting in "The Day The Dead Came to Show & Tell", which shows the convoluted backstory of a side character from the trilogy. It's also somewhat fatalistic, since we basically know what happens long before the story gets there, but I like the insight it brings to Foxy's character. Grant never pulls punches when it comes to gruesome violence or fatally flawed characters, and there's no shortage of it in Rise.

"Please Do Not Taunt The Octopus" and "Coming To You Live" pick up the timeline after Blackout, and they were easily my favorite stories. I love George and Shaun, and I like Dr. Abbey quite a bit, so seeing more of their stories was exactly what I signed up for. They also have two of the best plots (if not the best) in the collection, plus a cameo of a villain from Feedback for attentive readers. "Coming To You Live" is as much an opportunity to see how George and Shaun are managing their respective trauma after the events of the series as anything else, but the plot is especially tense given how much I love them and want them to have their happily zombie after. Those two stories are not to be missed for fans of the series, and if you're not interested in prequel Rising events, they're the ones to hit.

I review regularly at brightbeautifulthings.tumblr.com.

Wendy F says

Generally I'm not a fan of companion short story novels. I made one of my rare exceptions for *Rise* because I seriously love this world and these characters. Shawn and Georgia Mason, Alaric and Mahir... together they make up my favorite Zombie reality, that's including the crew of *Walking Dead*. There's something so inspirational about how humanity managed to triumph over the zombie apocalypse and even find a way to thrive. I'd love to see this story on the screen.

Anyway, my emotions ran the gamut with *Rise*. There were stories like *The Last Stand of the California Browncoats* that broke my heart, and made me sob. (As a *Firefly/Joss* fan myself, this touched me.) Then, there was *Everglades* that made me feel nothing, which was probably only because it was really really short. I didn't have the opportunity to know the character. As a character driven reader, really empathizing and caring about the character is imperative for me.

I think what I enjoyed the most about *Rise* was the opportunity to get to spend more time with beloved characters, but also to read how the virus started, and how it affected the whole world. In particular, I loved reading about Alex Kellis and his husband in *Countdown*. He was innocent, as far as any scientist can be. He was doing work that many may considered dangerous, but isn't that what scientists do? They discover ways to help humanity thrive. He never intended anything negative with his cure for the common cold. In the end he lost everything, and was villainized despite how screwed up the reporters lies were, and fact that it was the actions of the activists that truly caused chaos. It was so tragic.

Most importantly, what *Rise* really succeeded in accomplishing was getting me all amped up about *Feedback*. I know it's not going to be about the Mason's, but it is going to bring us back to the world and hopefully give us more amazing characters to love. Goodness knows, I'm definitely not ready to say goodbye.

Thank you to Orbit Books via Netgalley for providing a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

For this and other reviews, please visit [Badass Book Reviews](#).
