



Tales From the Radiation Age

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In a post-apocalyptic America that has shattered into a hundred perpetually warring fiefdoms, anyone with a loud voice and a doomsday weapon can be king (and probably has been). Duncan Archer—con man, carpetbagger, survivor—has found a way to somehow successfully navigate the end of the world, with its giant killer robots, radioactive mutants, mad scientists, rampant nanotechnology, armed gangs, sea monsters, and 101 unpleasant ways to die.

But when he meets Captain James Barrow, a former OSS agent and the most wanted man in the world, Duncan finds himself a reluctant hero caught up in a whole new level of weird, rollicking adventure...

And the second most wanted man in the world.

Tales from the Radiation Age is a throwback to the pulp-origins of science fiction, painting a vision of the future that's richly detailed, wildly imaginative—and altogether too easy to imagine.

This book was initially released in episodes as a Kindle Serial. All episodes are now available for immediate download as a complete book.

Tales From the Radiation Age Details

Date : Published July 23rd 2013 by 47North

ISBN :

Author : Jason Sheehan

Format : Kindle Edition 575 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Apocalyptic, Post Apocalyptic, Fiction, Dystopia, Horror

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From Reader Review Tales From the Radiation Age for online ebook

Peter says

So I'm giving this book 5 stars as there aren't half stars. I'm definitely going to suggest this book to my friends because it was very unique and very interesting. The book was originally released as a Kindle Serial, which I didn't even know was a thing, and thus separated into episodes. Before I knew it was serialized I was pleasantly surprised how reading things broken up into episodes was pretty damn cool. It felt like I was reading a TV show, bunch of story arcs that all played together in the end, very Doctor Whoish.

The story itself takes place in a dystopian near future where things have gone completely bananas, can't explain why as the reveal doesn't happen till a good way into the story. The author is telling the story as if the main character is telling the story to you, lots of fourth wall breaking which I personally thought was awesome; the Princess Bride pulled it off and so does this book. I was constantly trying to figure out just what in the hell was going on big picture and, yeah, I was never even close to figuring it out. Luckily it's all wrapped up in the end so your not left mystified as to what and why things happened.

You're following the story from the point of view of a mysterious character who you get more and more backstory on as the story progresses. The book makes you doubt that what he is telling you is the truth, although he even tells the reader he's a liar, and I was reading and completely perplexed as to who he really is, come to think of it I don't think you ever get his real name. He meets the most interesting character in the book, in my opinion, Captain James Barrow who is equally as mysterious as the narrator. Barrow basically adopts the main character into his gang and adventures ensue that seem completely random that culminate into a huge reveal in the last 20 pages in the book, the AH HA moment if you will. Seriously, I can't say much in the review because it would ruin the book, just read the damn thing, it's awesome.

KaCee Hudson says

This is the first Fiction book I've read in a while so it took me a bit to get through it (and it was definitely a little longer than it needed to be). But man am I glad I stuck with it! Such incredible imagery, such colorful characters. I've always been drawn to post-apocalyptic stories and this is definitely up there with the most imaginative and exciting. I fell in love with "the weird"! Duncan's voice is so clear and consistent, it makes the reeeeeeally out there moments feel that much more believable.

Jessica Meyers says

I can't explain how much I loved this book! The author, Jason Sheehan, Is brilliant! There were numerous times I literally laughed out loud at the quirkiness sense of humor of the characters in this book. The story in general was fascinating and went beyond my expectations! Absolutely phenomenal!

David Foster says

In the first twenty pages of this book, I thought I had stumbled into one of those beautiful books that would I would be telling people about as one of my favorites of the year. Then... it all just kind of lost its fire, and became something I was really working to get through so I could move on to something else. To my mind, the author of this book has a very unique shortcoming. He has a beautiful voice, creating characters that are rich, well put-together, and that stay true to themselves. And the unique dialect of the storyteller is very engaging... at first.

However, this book proves that you can have too much of a good thing. Too many times was I getting caught up in the rhythm of the action just to be led off into an unwanted side-path, seemingly only because the narrator liked to hear himself talk. The plot was sort of a disjointed stumbling through an adventure that lacked a cohesive, driving rhythm that action should have. And the semi-scientific half-explanations of what was happening to the world either strayed too far into the wandering mind of the theoretical physicist, or were just too half-baked to allow for my suspension of disbelief.

In all, it was disappointing - I think the author has a great book in him someplace; it just isn't this one. Perhaps if this potentially great author had met up with a great editor who was good at cutting out the fluff I could have had the wonderful experience I was hoping for.

Whitney Vestal says

it was alright. it started off great and I was hooked! i loved that it took place in my home coty, denver, post apocalypse but then as a reader below wrote, "it lost fire." I made it through about 60% before I got really lost, confused and bored trying to keep up. i forced myself to finish to see what happened but didnt feel it was worth it.

Joel says

I found the first chapter a bit hard to read because the style of writing is just so different to everything else I have read recently. Once I got into it I thoroughly enjoyed it. If you want to sink your teeth into a long story, don't let the fact that it was originally a collection of short stories put you off, it reads well as a novel.

The characters and plot are vivid and wildly imaginative, yet very believable. There's plenty of action, suspense and intrigue throughout the book, laced with dry, and sometimes quite dark, humor. The liberal application of science (some of it speculative) and technology, along with expansive descriptive prose creates a unique and fascinating story world.

The ending has a bit of a Greg Egan-ish twist - that's a compliment.

Certainly not your typical cookie cutter, dystopian SF novel.

Bruce Cable says

First of all, I listened to this book through Audible, and then I did something which I can honestly say that I've never done before; I ordered a sample of it from Amazon, which although brief, gave me an opportunity to see how I felt about the book, without the benefit of listening to the very upbeat, almost manic narrator, giving me a performance.

Upon the conclusion of my little self-gratifying experiment, I came to the realization that I preferred listening to it, because this just happens to be one of those few books that almost requires it to be performed.....

To be continued.....

Joni Johnsen says

My rating is somewhere between really liked it and "a most thoroughly wicked ride". It's been some time since I've had *fun* reading a book. While it has many of the standard dystopian elements, it is by no means a standard dystopian tale. This book was an adventure from beginning to end but I never had an idea where I was going from one chapter to the next. Completely unpredictable which I loved. This series is what I consider a "classic pulp" novel and I'm very surprised more people aren't talking about it or haven't discovered it.

The characters are so rich and believably vivid that I found myself thinking several times about what a great television series this would be. I originally purchased this as a series and after the first three or four installments I had to let it go until I had the whole thing. I'm glad I did as I was unable to put it down once I picked it up again. Just when you think you have an idea of where the story is going to go, it does a complete 180 without skipping a beat.

The bottom line: Buy the ticket, take the ride.

John R. Dailey Jr. says

A FINE TALE OF A TALE OF A TALE OF A TALE OF A TALE OF A TALE IT IS...

Hello, this book is, without a doubt, the best rambling story that I have ever read. I could be telling you truthfully for sure or I could be lieficating my tale off. Considering that I done ratified this doohicky with 5 of them oblique starified thingys, you can use your best judgemental. Thank you for your time and pass me a drink if you don't mind.

Patrick says

A long time ago there was a movie called The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai. There was also a novelization, written by Earl Mac Rauch, which is told from the perspective of Reno, one of Buckaroo's team members. That is the kind of book I was hoping this would be.

(Buckaroo's in the middle, Reno is in the dark suit with a red shirt. Bonus: Jeff Goldblum)

I was completely wrong.

I've never been happier to finish a book than when I finished this one. It was a slow form of torture reading this book, where instead of the fingerscrew and the garrote I was assaulted with adjectives, nouns, and verbs among other linguistic implements.

There is a plot, there are some interesting characters, but instead of developing them the author is too busy having the narrator describe his experiences in unnecessarily excruciating detail. This narrator loves to talk, and he loves to talk about himself talking:

And then it was my turn to say nothing—a state which came neither natural nor pleasantly to me.

and

I love to talk, it's true. Love the sound of my own voice, me.

Two stars instead of one, because of the train robbery with dinosaurs, and the fact that the author threw in (at least) two Buckaroo Banzai references (Yoyodyne and John Smallberries). Maybe this kind of book is for you, but definitely not for me.

The riveting stegosaur-riding scene.

James says

Loved the way it is written.

I found the writing style of this book great. And any story about a piano playing con man has to be good doesn't it? Dystopia at its best.

Chris says

I didn't expect much from this book. I saw it on sale on day and it tickled my PA itch, so I jumped. Bought the audio book and it came up in the queue, so I went for it.

I'm glad I did, because this is a witty, enjoyable tale with all of the twists and turns of a good spy novel. The characters are larger than life types, but very fallible. You never can be quite sure if they are telling the truth, so they are able to take the story wherever they wish.

The world is about as strange as you would expect a world to be where two (or more) realities have collided and probability sometimes disappears. Things are broken, times are hard, and people are mean. However, this is the type of world that I love. Now do I think people would start talking like 1860's Tombstone residents because of these hard times? Not really, but it didn't really bother me. I found it charming, but I can see where it would beat some others down.

The story is told in a series of small novellas that follow a part of the narrators life in this crazy world. They all fit together well. The story itself had a lot of wit and humor, and I appreciated it because it really fit with the big characters. Crazy things happen, and no one takes themselves seriously. It's just a lot of fun.

I hope the author writes more in this world, because it's a pretty messed-up place. I would love to visit it again.

Philip McClimon says

Deadwood meets Discworld

...or something darn near like it. Maybe Alice in Wonderland, too cause I sure felt like I fell through some kind of rabbit hole into Never, Never Land...which is a Peter Pan reference, of course. Maybe the author watched Buckaroo Banzai one too many times, which I think is an impossibility. I swear Captain James Barrow is Captain Jack Sparrow...yeah, think on that awhile. Suffice to say, this is one strange trip, but one you will be very glad to have taken. Full of sentences that use twenty-five words when nine would do and characters that defy explanation but you will grow very fond of, this book is a lot of fun. Don't ask me to explain too much of how it all went down cause I still ain't sure, but I am sure I had a good time experiencing it and recommend it to you. Pick up a copy, but don't take a drug test after, cause you'll feel sure you really were high as a kite reading it.

Julie Capell says

Loved, loved, loved this book, and a big reason is the world building. The action is set in a post-apocalyptic world where the government is mostly absent and technology consists of what you can gather from junk heaps and duct-tape together. The descriptions were so vivid I could picture every lopsided, Frankenstein machine in all its glory.

“Our ride looked like an end-of-year welding project at a school for drunken malcontents and multiple amputees.”

“Of course I had a phone. Had three of them, actually, of varying vintages and levels of functionality, because, seriously, what was this, Nepal? The West was having itself a nice, civilized, apocalypse, thank you very much!”

Another big plus was the narrator. I listened to this as an audiobook narrated by Nick Podehl and he was fantastic. Of course, it helped that the source material is crazily imaginative, extremely funny and wickedly complicated. But Mr. Podehl, channeling Captain Reynolds--and a little John Wayne--gave the whole piece a Firefly aura. Dangerous territory, trying to walk in the huge footsteps of Joss Whedon, but Sheehan does it and succeeds spectacularly. Here's a great example of the Firefly-esque dialog:

“It occurs to me that a man is having a certain kind of a conversation when he intimates that a man with no gun needs one. But a very different kind when he tells a man with one gun that he needs more.”

But behind all the fun and games—and there are a lot of those—lies a very serious plot that runs straight through from beginning to end. Watching the author spin his tale was, at many points, like watching an incredibly skilled juggler. There are so many balls up in the air that at times I wondered if the author had lost track of what he was doing, but then the plot would reappear, and all the craziness would be revealed as having an actual purpose in furthering the plot.

We never do completely understand how the world got the way it is—the protagonist insists that civilization “jumped the shark” when Siri started talking to us and we talked back—but we are treated to one of the most insane battles ever imagined as the heroes try to make the world right again. The description of the battle is masterful and reminded me strongly of early Neal Stephenson. The Neal Stephenson of “Cryptonomicon” who actually knew when to go into full on detail mode and when “the rest is just a car chase.”

It's hard to find out much about Jason Sheehan, but apparently he was a restaurant critic and food editor at Philadelphia Magazine. I, for one, hope this book gets enough attention so that Jason is able to keep on writing. I can't wait to see the next idea that comes out of his fertile imagination.

Wyatt Johnson says

I tried to get going 3 different times, and never made it more than 7% through. Just too oddly written for me.
