



## Cruel World

*Joe Hart*

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Hidden away from the world by his famous father, Quinn Kelly strives to find meaning in his life while struggling with a deformity that has kept him from leaving the only home he has ever known. On the eve of his departure a sudden and deadly virus sweeps across the nation, killing nearly all it touches. Within days Quinn is left to fend for himself in an empty world.

But there is something still very much alive beyond the walls of his sanctuary, its malicious intent clear all too soon.

Joining forces with a young single mother and her blind son, Quinn must cross a dangerous and silent America in the search for refuge and a truth that may shatter his sanity and strip him of the last things he holds dear.

## Cruel World Details

Date : Published December 2nd 2014 by Black Spine Books

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Author : Joe Hart

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## From Reader Review Cruel World for online ebook

### **Alaa Ahmed says**

#### **Good story minor "glitches"**

The story is your typical end of the world adventure with familiar components like the unlikely hero and a side romance story. The action is good. The only two problems for me:

1) The background is scientifically highly unlikely or even impossible. Even though the author threw in some biology near the end it's still scientifically wrong.

2) The convenience of finding - in an apocalyptic deserted world - the only person who hold the key to solving the mystery.

Overall it's a good read if you can get past these two points.

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### **Julie says**

Mild spoilers follow. I debated on this one. It is over the top and a bit predictable. It has a plague and mutants and a lot of improbabilities. The religious commune and few other tangents bothered me. However the dog lives (take note Joe Hill) and it was an intense and fun journey. For Quinn, I keep picturing the kid from Mask. It is a Cruel World but sometimes an apocalypse can put your priorities in order.

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### **Danielle Reynolds says**

#### **Better than expected!**

So after having this story downloaded for months and not getting past the first few pages without some effort, I was short of something to read one day so powered through the first couple of chapters. Turned out it sucked me in! The plot is Stephen Kingesque in substance & given that SK is my absolute all time, my persistence paid off. Bit disappointed with the lack of detail in certain scenes, and really hoped for a sequel at the end, but all in all not half bad.

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### **John Wiltshire says**

This is an excellent thought-provoking, apocalyptic novel. In most scenarios where a tiny group of people are attempting to survive in an apocalyptic world, I get incensed if they make stupid decisions. You know the kind of thing: giving away their last bottle of water to someone who is doomed anyway; taking pity on someone and helping them when it's obvious to us, the reader, that this is going to come back and bite the group. However, the author has rather shaken my preconceptions with this book. The MC is genuine ingenue (masculine version), in that he has been isolated from all society and home-schooled by his rich father because he suffers from fibrous dysplasia (facial deformity). Shut away as he has been, educated by loving tutors and knowing nothing but kindness and love, he's motivated only by these emotions when his world tumbles down around him. He does just the things I hate--helping strangers, giving his precious hoard of

rations away--but I can only applaud him for his decisions. I hate being wrong footed...

And what a strange apocalyptic scenario Hart has created. First a flu pandemic and then a hideous genetic change in some of the afflicted. And this seems impossible when you're reading, but quite surprisingly, Hart ties it all up at the end and offers an inspired explanation for these events.

But best of all, besides the gripping storyline, the genuinely appealing characters and the great dog (Denver), this is just well written. It's nuanced, balanced and I couldn't put it down. It's the sort of story where you are in the action with the characters, living their lives, and when you pick the book up you're going back into their world.

Great stuff and highly recommended.

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### **Marissa Farrar says**

I really enjoyed this read about Quinn, a young man who is the son of a famous actor, but who has been in hiding due to his facial deformities. The book starts a little slow as we learn about Quinn's background and his life in the house his father has kept him at, but once the disease starts wiping people out, it picks up pace! There is a love interest - a young woman with a son who is blind - and the relationship that develops between both her and Quinn, and Quinn and her son, is believable and touching. The disease itself is something original - those infected either melt into a puddle of goo, or grow into huge, man eating stilts! Perhaps I did have to suspend my belief a little, but I enjoyed the explanation, which comes later in the book. As with many post apocalyptic books, the main danger the pair had to face came from those who were left behind, but the stilts had their scary moments too! Recommended for all fans of this genre.

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### **Joe Stamber says**

Different take on the Post Apocalyptic Zombie story, from both the point of view of the main character and the zombies themselves. Hart has been clever to cast the hero as a young man who has been hidden away due to his deformity and has no experience of the outside world. This plays a big part in the story, as do the other leading players who are also well thought out. Although *Cruel World* has much in common with its peers, basically being a road trip where the characters get into scrapes and get out of them, I really enjoyed Hart's writing style and my interest never waned. There are flaws, particularly Quinn's transformation from reclusive kid to superhero, but this well told tale kept me entertained from start to finish and deserves its high rating.

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### **Ziggy Nixon says**

#### **Summary:**

An absolutely riveting, high-tension 4+ star thriller from Joe Hart! After 'Obscura', this is my 2nd JH novel and he really knows how to deliver a great read! In both cases, the books are built around absolutely terrific concepts, even if the reader's belief not only has to be suspended but thrown away for good in terms of either the science behind it all or even the coincidences that are just a bit too freaky to buy into! Still, I would recommend this one highly to anyone that's a fan of the zombie genre (they're not but ...) or apocalypse genre (read: training manuals) or just plain seekers of a damn fine book!

#### **Review:**

It seems kind of fortuitous (or not?) that for this year's Halloween fest I've read two rather amazing takes on zombie apocalypses that technically did not include zombies! The first being Russell James' "Q Island" which blew me away (the 2nd book no so much but still very good) and then now Joe Hart's "Cruel World". Both books share just an amazing level of imaginative originality in getting the whole sh\$tstorm started as well as a providing the reader with a deep connection to the main characters that find themselves in dire situations not of their own making.

In addition, both books are just jam-packed with action-sequences and situations that just have you gasping as you read! I will say that "Cruel World" felt a bit herky jerky in that regard, in that the pattern of 'drive a bit, find a place to stay, deal with the stilts and/or bad humans' routine felt just like that, namely, a bit of a repetitive routine after a while. Throwing in a SPOILER serial killer END SPOILER at one point was good and creepy so kudos for that.

Still, you have to wonder how a 20-year old kid that's never left home, a 23-year old single mom and a blind kid really got THAT lucky for so long. Not only being attacked and all but everywhere seemed to have food or weapons and the roads were only seldom unpassable, etc. Again, you have to be willing to let facts like that slide to get the full benefit here. I would have also liked to have seen a few more characters developed throughout a la "Obscura" as well as maybe a little less of the tired zombie-book cliché of 'the humans are monsters, too' (the bit at the army base was too much) but overall loved it!

Conclusion? Totally worth checking out. I really think fans of any of the genres this book touches on and especially fans of young writers like Joe Hill will really enjoy this ride! Aloha!

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### **Carol (StarAngel's Reviews) Allen says**

4.5 Awesome Stars!!

I absolutely LOVED this book...very unique concept on the apocalypse and what happened to create the walking undead.

Loved the characters and the development of each one...especially how the author tied in the physically challenged dealing with the end of the world.

Loved it!

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### **Reeda Booke says**

Quinn was born with a genetic deformity that made his famous father, James Kelly, hide him from the cruelties of the world. That is until a global pandemic changes everything. The virus just doesn't create zombies, oh no, this is worse and scarier. And now Quinn has to go out into a world he doesn't know and find a way to live. Along the way he picks up Alice and her blind son, Ty, and together they must learn how to survive in this changed world.

I really enjoyed this book! I loved the character of Quinn and the little boy, Ty. The story moved along at a good pace, the characters fleshed out, and even the "monsters" were unique and different. I read this one

straight through, (right after reading the author's book, "Sightings".) I recommend both, but this one was particularly good.

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### **Bobby says**

Perils of Pauline meet The Omega Man in this well-written apocalyptic story. And in the midst of it all is a deformed man with a heart of gold watching over a single mom whose young son is blind! Sounds crazy but somehow Mr. Hart makes it work.

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### **Tammy says**

I really love the way Joe Hart writes. He should be up there next to Mccammon, King, Koontz and all the other top horror writers. I love that the lead character has odds already placed on him before the "action" starts. He keeps going at a even pace with a few good "OMG" thrown in for good measure. Can't wait to read more from Mr. Hart.

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### **Linda K. Melzer says**

#### **Keep 'em coming Joe, from an avid fan.**

Another great "horror" novel from Joe Hart. I'm a believer in your writing skills and your story lines. Never before in my 70+ years of reading have I read such absorbing paragraphs, mile after mile. One criticism, 1 less encounter with the stilts would have been nice. I couldn't imagine a "good" ending, but as usual you pulled it off in a satisfying fashion. I recommend this novel and all of his other books. Thanks. BTW, I'm basically recliner ridden, so with the help of my Kindle I have a library at my fingertips!!

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### **Jim Edmonds says**

#### **What a wonderful surprise!**

I've never read anything by Joe Hart prior to Cruel World and had no idea what I'd find. Another young hero finding himself in a post apocalyptic world? And the answer is yes, but not at all in a familiar or hackneyed situation.

I'm not going to give away the plot but it is wholly original and completely attention grabbing. I hated putting it down and couldn't wait to see what would happen next!

Sorry, but there's no more time to waste, I've got to find another Joe Hart novel.

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### **John Mahoney says**

I must admit that my initial thoughts were that I was reading about Captain Trips all over again; but I was wrong, very wrong. The story developed well, standing alone from other novels about the world population wiped out by a cold virus. Quinn is a very likable character and I enjoyed his progression throughout. His ability to get out of tight situations was possibly too good to be true, but I kept reminding myself that it is fiction. (Maybe Matt Damon could play him in the movie). In the early stages of the book I was probably only halfway sold on it, but by the end I had upped my appreciation to the 4 star rating.

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### **Enrico Viero says**

I gave this book two stars based on that it was well written, a very easy read and quite entertaining. However, I did not like the stilts. Too much magic for me.

It also felt like one of these movies where the hero can never die no matter what he/she does.

I think the explanation in the end was bad.

A little too much "something feels wrong".

I really liked Quinn and how he was portrayed, he's a really likable guy.

I don't get this "I have to risk my life to find out what started it", seems like just a way to move the story forward.

A great idea with not so good execution in my humble opinion.

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