



Morning Is Dead

Andersen Prunty

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Things went wrong for Alvin and April Blue. In a hospital at night, April sits next to Alvin, bandages covering his burned skin, listening to his heart beat on a monitor, and wonders how they ended up here. But she can never imagine the world of insanity, drugs, and crime that Alvin has fallen into. A place where fetuses are used to create simulacra, radiation victims prowl the streets looking for sacrifice, houses are arbitrarily detonated, and the police force is more like a marauding gang of thugs. A place where it's always dark and morning is dead...

Morning Is Dead Details

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From Reader Review Morning Is Dead for online ebook

11811 (Eleven) says

Strange, unique, imaginative, batshit crazy. Well worth my time.

Craig DiLouie says

MORNING IS DEAD by Andersen Prunty (Grindhouse Press, 2010) tells the story of Alvin and April, an unhappy couple reeling from a horrifying event.

Alvin is in a hospital, barely alive. April keeps watch at his bedside.

While April reveals the story of what happened to bring Alvin to this state in the real world, Alvin enters a parallel dilapidated world of permanent night where cops are drug-addled goons, psychopaths roam the streets, demolition crews randomly blow up houses, radioactive zombies prowl for victims, and nobody has any hope. He tries to get home, only to be thwarted at every turn by the denizens of the night world, while April must ultimately decide his fate.

The final reveal wasn't particularly surprising, but it was satisfying, and the story maintained my sense of wonder until all is revealed. A short work, MORNING IS DEAD is a nice little piece of horror, an enjoyable tour of a richly imagined parallel world of permanent night and madness.

Ubiquitousbastard says

Freaky and depressing. It was pretty easy to see why things were happening the way that they were, but the sort of Silent Hill-ish characters made it interesting anyway. Sort of like reading the implosion of a person in reverse.

Lance says

Morning is Dead is another nice job by Andersen Prunty. In fact, I think it's probably my favorite book of his so far. The book is darker than some of his previous works. But, at the same time I found more humor in Morning is Dead. Maybe Mr. Prunty did not intend to be funny and it's possible that I'm just a sick bastard. However, with police characters named Officer Fuckpants and Officer Bitchhole, I can't help but to think that Prunty had to be grinning while he was writing parts of this one.

I won't bother giving a synopsis of Morning is Dead. You can read the book's description for that. My purpose is to tell you to read Morning is Dead. Buy it now. Read it. If you want a book that is scary, creepy, disturbing, surreal, and compelling, then you will enjoy Morning is Dead. The book is dark take on alternate realities that gave me a penicillin-resistant form of the heebie-jeebies . Or maybe the story just consists of the delusions of a brain damaged coma patient. I don't know. I haven't figured that one out yet. But I do know

that I truly enjoyed the quick-paced and disturbing story and plan to check out more of Mr. Prunty's work (The Beard is next up on my Prunty reading list).

Robert Beveridge says

Andersen Prunty, **Morning Is Dead** (Grindhouse Press, 2010)

The big twist at the end of this novel has been revealed in a couple of other reviews I've read. I will avoid doing so here, but were I you, I would avoid reading other reviews of the book until after you've read the book itself in order to save yourself for the final chapter. Anyway.

Coming into this book, I thought I knew two things. The first was the word on the street that Andersen Prunty was poised to become the first bizarro author who could actually break into the mainstream, as opposed to mainstream authors who've been co-opted into bizarro (Robert Devereaux and Steve Aylett being obvious examples). The second is that there were zombies. Turns out the first is accurate, anyway. I can't claim to be anything remotely close to widely read in bizarro, but what I have read of it has often seemed the work of inspired amateurs; enjoyable, but lacking the sort of experience and polish that it takes to sell a novel to Doubleday or Grand Central or whoever the big publishing house is these days. (I've been out of the bookselling business for a while. When I was still in it, Random House was the big deal...) Prunty definitely has the enthusiasm of the inspired amateur about him, but there's also a bit of that spit and polish, as well. It's obvious there's an overarching theme here, there's a sense that Prunty really thought about where he wanted this book to go and what he wanted it to do, rather than just sitting down and seeing where the ride took him, and I cannot overestimate the importance of that in putting together a piece of professional-quality fiction. In short, I'm telling you that if you're intrigued by this whole bizarro thing and you're looking for your first intro to the genre, this is an excellent place to start.

Plot: Alvin Blue is in a coma in the hospital. His wife April is sitting beside his bed, waiting for him to either come out of said coma or die. The narrative goes back and forth between April conversing with her friend Maribel in the hospital room and pieces from Alvin's perspective. Are they horrific nightmares? Is he living some sort of purgatorial atonement in his head? Is something else entirely going on? Or, as it seems, has he truly slipped into an alternate dimension, where the local industrial plant (the Point) is actually a shadow government that controls all of Dayton, Ohio, where the sun never shines, where women make money by selling fetuses to Dr. Lucky's Abortion Clinic, where the cops are drugged-out sex fiends and radiation-scarred mutants walk the streets in search of fresh prey?

Morning Is Dead is a blissful, somewhat gross (though not nearly so much as most of the bizarro I've read) amalgam of Anthony Burgess' *The Wanting Seed* and *Dark City*, the Alex Proyas film. Those are two influences that it would be pretty darned difficult to screw up, at least as far as I'm concerned, given a writer with any talent whatsoever. And while Prunty's stuff does have the rushed, sometimes skeletal feel that's been common to the bizarro I've read over the past few years, he is undeniably a talented writer, and he does a solid job with this story. Well worth picking up, and as I said before, a very good introduction to this new-ish subgenre. *** 1/2

Janie C. says

This story is set in a city of surreal night; a dreamscape of chaos and grotesqueries. You cannot wake from this dream. It guides your movements while you try to hide in the shadows. Monsters are everywhere and your last hope is about to explode. Brush aside the rust. Can you open your eyes?

Cari says

2.5 stars with no inclination to round up.

Another two-star reviewer mentioned she started reading this, set it down one day, and then just never felt like picking it back up so never reached the end; I nearly did the same, finishing Morning is Dead only so I could get it off my dining room table where it sat collecting dust. The story is decent and the dual perspective helps keeps the reader from being completely lost, but the writing is underwhelming and there's no reason to care about anyone or anything in the book. I had high hopes but alas, this one wasn't for me.

Kathryn says

I am very happy I read this book. Since I've been dipping a toe or two into the bizarro reading pool, I have encountered many wonderful, original, and freaky ideas but this is the first book with the trifecta of a character I genuinely liked, a world I was interested in, and a story I wanted to know the ending to.

The writing is effortless, with a wonderful flow and there is a real story here. The book easily fits in the bizarro genre but there is a plot, or point, something missing from most other books I have so far read in the genre. I dislike bizarro fiction that is weird simply for the sake of being weird. The elements in this book all contribute to the story, to the character's state of mind. There is a large dose of grotesquery and I loved the (inner) setting.

I sympathized with the main character, his confusion and frustration. I guess the book claims Alvin's actions were due to (view spoiler). I liked how the book made me think about people who hang on the fringes of society, people who are rather useless and unproductive. I absolutely loved the rades. I can not say any more from fear of spoiling the book. I highly recommend this and will be reading more of Prunty's work very soon.

As the only piece of bizarro (with a plot) fiction I have rated 5 stars, I highly recommend the read.

Bonus points for the cop names, particularly Officer Assclown.

Nick Cato says

I'll never forget one of the first reviews I read for the David Lynch film, ERASERHEAD. The reviewer had said it was "The closest anyone has come to capturing a dream on film." Now with countless viewings under my belt, I fully agree.

While a bit easier to piece together than Lynch's film, Prunty's latest novella has the feel of one of those dreams we all have where insane things begin to come into our lives and we can do very little to change them. In **MORNING IS DEAD**'s case, a man named Archer has his home and wife taken away. To make matters worse, there's a quasi-clone of himself now living with his wife, his home is being rigged for detonation by a strange group of gas-mask wearing men, and when Archer finds himself behind bars (in a police station that seems more like a gang hang out than a law establishment), he learns that he's also been denied daytime itself; somehow he has become a citizen of the night. And in Prunty's night world, Archer encounters all kinds of strange characters and situations in his attempt to get back to dawn.

MORNING IS DEAD works on several levels, one being its lightning-fast pace; Prunty manages to throw the weird at his readers without causing too much head-scratching and without slowing down the page flipping. His characters (from the questionable heroics of Archer and Ben, to the "abortion sluts" such as May, to the radiation-filled Raders) are well done and quite memorable. And like a true nightmare, this night-time world has danger at every corner, yet it doesn't stop those trapped within it from wandering around, trying to find a way back to the morning.

This first offering from Grindhouse Press is a great little read from an author who continues to pave paths for "normal" readers to thirst for something more bizarre.

Greg says

Thank you Goodreads, and Grindhouse for the very first, First Reads, books I've won that I can say I really enjoyed. Although I think if my first first reads win, that sorry excuse of a book by the Sped's had been mixed with this book the results would have been even better (a note to *ALL* authors present, future, and well fuck it past too.... Heidi and Spencer inserted as main characters into any book would instantly make the book at least twenty percent better (the equivalent of at least one Goodreads.com star rating), besides being amazing people and stunning characters themselves, they also are a new archetype that *everyone* can relate with. I shouldn't have even had to write this, but for some bizarre reason there has only been one book about Heidi and Spencer so far, come'on authors lets correct this miscarriage of justice and literature!!).

I liked the book quite a bit even if Heidi and Spencer were not the main characters.

P.S.

For future librarians concerned with appeal factors and readers advisory, this book will appeal to people who find foul language hilarious in an stunted development kind of way, who have ever worked the third shift in a shitty town and started to feel disconnected with the day time world, and women who get pregnant in order to sell their abortions to multi-national corporations. There are other appeal factors I'm sure but these were the big three for me.

Grant Wamack says

Morning is Dead is a short bizarro horror novel written by Andersen Prunty. I'm not going to lie to you. Prunty is one of my favorite authors so I always have high expectations and he has never fell short.

This particular story is told through alternating chapters. One involves Alvin Blue, an ordinary man who gets

sucked into the night. The other story involves Alvin's wife, April, who is watching over Alvin's comatose body and takes place entirely inside of a hospital room.

Alvin is introduced to the world of the night, a distinctly scary yet weird reality, when he gets arrested outside of his house and a doppelganger takes his place. Alvin is thrown in a jail, run by the sleaziest cops you will ever see, and processed deeper into the "night". Here, he begins to learn about his terrible situation. He learns that his house is about to be detonated and the only people who end up in the "night" are those who have previously worked for the Point.

All the while, Alvin has to deal with rades, who are radioactive creatures, super horny women, and an assortment of crazy people in a desperate attempt to find his way back to morning and his wife. The subsequent series of events take on an air of mystery and is slightly reminiscent of the more memorable episodes of the Twilight Zone.

Morning is Dead is funny, disconcerting, and overflowing with paranoia. Buy this book before you find your morning dead and withered on your doorstep.

Steve Lowe says

Andersen Prunty's night people in MORNING IS DEAD are an intriguing breed. They are fornicators and wretches, consumed by violence and sex and all manner of vice. As they "process" deeper into the night, their hopelessness grows and their humanity dims. What makes Prunty's night different here is that it is populated by radioactive people called "rades", all-night abortion clinics and its overwhelming clientele, covert technicians who wire homes to detonate, and a police force more dangerous than the worst thugs on the streets. The Dayton, Ohio depicted in MORNING IS DEAD is ruled over by a monolithic company called the Point, which seems to be behind every bad thing that happens to Dayton and its inhabitants, including the protagonist, Alvin Blue.

Alvin and his wife have grown apart and as this realization begins to dawn on him, the night suddenly decides to take him in to be processed, meaning he will never see the daylight, or the morning, again. With no job and no ability to conceive children, Alvin's usefulness to society seems to be all used up, leaving only his skin, which is valuable to the Point for reasons that won't be revealed here, lest too much of the story be spoiled.

What most interested me about MORNING IS DEAD is the notion of an alternate reality within the night. Drive through nearly any downtown in America and you see dark places – alleys and corners and buildings that seem different at night. In between these cracks lies another world where many dark things exist, which is what makes Prunty's night feel all too real and unsettling. What would happen if someone who lives a daytime existence – work from 9-5, normal interactions with others, an employed family man or woman – was suddenly thrust into this other reality, where drugs and prostitution and vice is a way of life? This book examines such a scenario, and does so to dark, imaginative and entertaining results.

The other intriguing theme in MORNING is the town of Dayton itself, a Rust Belt city in Ohio that grew up around manufacturing and the auto industry. Just a couple years ago, GM plant closings near Dayton were called a "death knell" to the town because of how intertwined the company was in so many aspects of life. That vibe is echoed in MORNING and its fictional company, the Point. Though this is not directly discussed in the story, it shows up in clever ways, such as the scene where Alvin inspects the home of a "sleeper" or a

person who never wakes during the night. The sleeper, who lives in the daytime and is (presumably) still a productive member of society (no doubt employed by the Point), is what Alvin used to be, but on closer inspection, Alvin sees that the man has begun to rust. He soon discovers he is rusting as well.

All aspects of life tend to ebb and flow through the Point, as is common in manufacturing towns where huge companies can employ as much as half the population, while a great many more are employed indirectly. The same holds true with the Point, which is insidious in its ways of using, and using up, the people of the town until there is nothing left. This is, of course, my opinion of what Prunty was going for here, or at least what I got from it. I could be way off on his intentions with this story, but if nothing else, at least he got me thinking, which is what I love about and look for in good fiction.

MORNING IS DEAD is a dark, disturbing glimpse at an alternate reality that, upon closer inspection, does not seem so farfetched, which makes it all the more unsettling. This was my introduction to Prunty's work, and I look forward to more from him. His writing is crisp and intelligent, and MORNING IS DEAD is a great example of unsettling horror that relies on ideas and imagination rather than shock value and gimmicks to impart its message and leave a mark. But there's still plenty of shock and blood and shoot-'em-up violence in here to make it a tense page-turner, as well. I highly recommend it.

Marvin says

Andersen Prunty doesn't believe in foreplay. He gets right into the grittiness and the weirdness of his story then leaves you to sort out the meaning as you helplessly read along. In *Morning is Dead* protagonist Alvin Blue is both in a coma and is battling through a world in which his house is being prepared for detonation, the police are no more than drug and sex addled thugs, and radiated monsters called rades roam the eternal night. Saying anything else about the plot of this 142 page novel would not be a good idea. Let's just quote one of the characters and state that Mr. Blue is in "the blackest fucking rabbit hole you could possibly fall down". If you want a different kind of horror tale that never lets you go for days after you read it than *Morning Is Dead* will fit the bill. Another excellent novel from one of the most promising new writers in the Bizarro genre and possibly in any genre.

KnNaRfF says

I really enjoyed this book. Anderson Prunty writes extremely atmospheric books with the right slow burning pace. This is one of those books I will be reading and enjoying again (....and again, and again, and again.....)

Matthew Revert says

I could say everything that needs saying about this book like this: it lives up to its cover. Brandon Duncan's cover art for 'Morning is Dead' is a treat for the eyes. So much so, that I was a little scared of reading what the cover represented, lest I walked away disappointed. I don't normally start reviews with covergasms, but I really couldn't help it in this case.

The tantalizingly named, Andersen Prunty is an author I only recently started exploring. His novel, 'The Beard', was made available as a free download and like a parasite, I jumped all over it. That was a great

book in its own right but with ‘Morning is Dead’ he goes one better. Best labeled a Bizarro horror, ‘Morning is Dead’ revolves around Alvin Blue and the disorienting, corroding world that springs to life around him. Paranoia looms large around every page and in a word, it’s bleak. Alvin’s life contains no security, no trust. It’s a world that feels, despite the absurdity, depressingly real.

What makes ‘Morning is Dead’ such a success is the realistic way in which it’s written. The confusion and dread that Alvin feels is passed to the reader via a strange, literary symbiosis. Without the realism, this book would fall flat because it relies on the reader’s emotional commitment. As Alvin comes to believe that his marriage is threatened, we come to empathise with him. As houses in the neighborhood are detonated at random, we feel the terrified confusion that results. The world of ‘Morning is Dead’ is off kilter in a major way.

The impression of a classic sci-fi film also comes to surface. The paranoia harks back to 1950s nuclear terror, which given the current climate, makes it alarmingly pertinent. Nobody is safe and nothing is sacred. In Alvin’s mind, his wife would happily throw away their marriage for someone who looks like a better version of him. Victims of radiation poisoning stalk the streets ominously. The neighbors are hiding something. The themes are timeless and executed in a way that doesn’t lean too heavily on classic clichés.

Despite how hollow it made me feel, Andersen Prunty should be applauded for ‘Morning is Dead’. It’s an amazing book – a book that could have been twice the length without complaint from me.
