



Nights of the Living Dead: An Anthology

Jonathan Maberry (editor) , George A. Romero

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In 1968 the world experienced a brand new kind of terror with the debut of George A. Romero's landmark movie *Night of the Living Dead*. The newly dead rose to attack the living. Not as vampires or werewolves. This was something new...and terrifying. Since then, zombies have invaded every aspect of popular culture.

But it all started on that dreadful night in a remote farmhouse...

Nights of the Living Dead returns to that night, to the outbreak, to where it all began. *New York Times* bestselling author Jonathan Maberry teams with the godfather of the living dead himself, George A. Romero to present a collection of all new tales set during the 48 hours of that legendary outbreak.

Nights of the Living Dead includes stories by some of today's most important writers: Brian Keene, Carrie Ryan, Chuck Wendig, Craig Engler, David J. Schow, David Wellington, Issac Marion, Jay Bonansinga, Joe R. Lansdale, John Russo, John Skipp, Keith R.A. DeCandido, Max Brallier, Mike Carey, Mira Grant, Neal Shusterman & Brandon Shusterman, and Ryan Brown. Plus original stories by Romero and Maberry!

For fans of *The Walking Dead*, *World War Z*, and anyone who loves scary stories. Take a bite out of this!

Nights of the Living Dead: An Anthology Details

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Author : Jonathan Maberry (editor) , George A. Romero

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From Reader Review **Nights of the Living Dead: An Anthology** for online ebook

Thomas Flowers says

I will say this, I burned through this book quickly. Lots of great stories to enjoy, I especially like the truck driver one "Dead Run" by Chuck Wendig. "Deadliner" by Shusterman was also entertaining. My favorite from this collection is a tie between "Snaggleteeth," by Brallier---which worked like a zombie version of The Tell-Tale-Heart, and "Jimmy Jay Baxter's Last, Best Day on Earth" by John Skipp, even though the ending was very abrupt, it was devilishly fun.

Most of the others were good enough, though surprisingly not fitting into the mold of "Nights of the Living Dead." I had thought these were supposed to be stories based on Night of the Living Dead, that is 1968 in all its wonderful awfulness. However, there were quite a few that stepped outside that timeline, mentioning cell phones and other such things that were obviously not around back then. In fact, only a few took advantage of that kind of plot-line, using the real turmoil in 1968 to juxtaposed against the zombie Apocalypse--highlighting how we as a species are truly are own worst enemy.

Still...they were entertaining enough to warrant a 3.5 stars from this humble reader.

Andrew Sydlik says

With a total of 18 stories set within the world of Night of the Living Dead, this anthology offers a great diversity of styles and twists on the zombie apocalypse. Some stories directly reference characters or events from the film, some obliquely reference Night, and others are completely independent stories set during the zombie outbreak that follow the same general zombie rules. Although an anthology like this may seem a bit tedious unless you are a hardcore zombie fanatic, it offers enough variety to entertain most horror enthusiasts, or anyone wanting to pay homage to George Romero's legacy. I won the book from Fangoria in a Twitter contest, sadly shortly before Romero died on July 16.

The anthology features big names in horror including editor Jonathan Maberry, Joe R. Landsdale, Mike Carey (aka M. R. Carey), John Skipp, and Brian Keene, and a story by George Romero himself and original Night of the Living Dead co-writer John Russo (who also wrote the novel that inspired Dan O'Bannon's 1985 Return of the Living Dead).

Of course, like with any anthology, the quality is a bit uneven. You can probably tell within a few pages whether the story appeals to you, and most of them are short, so even if you come across one that's not great, it's not too difficult to get through it. Unfortunately, it starts and ends with stories that aren't the most exciting of the collection, but I guess that all depends on what speaks to you. There are action-heavy narratives and character-driven stories. There are unpleasant anti-heroes, despicable villains, and deeply sympathetic protagonists. And of course, the living dead in lots of different situations. For example, you've got zombies in space in David Wellington's "Orbital Decay," and zombies in the zoo in Mira Grant's "You Can Stay All Day." Romero's story has the same blend of clinical nihilism and psychological intimacy of the film that is the anthology's namesake. Russo's is a bit more lacking, though it's still a fun tale of multiple survivors banding together.

About a third of these stories are very strong, about a third are decent/enjoyable/fun, and about a third are lackluster stories that did not engage me for one reason or another. Still, I found the range of stories and their different inspirations from *Night* to be admirable and compelling. I've got a spoiler-free description of each story with an individual rating for each if that helps you get a better sense of whether you'd find the collection up your alley, but if you have the slightest interest in zombies, I recommend just getting this book and reading through the whole thing without too much foreknowledge, because discovering what is happening in each story is part of the fun.

"Dead Mans Curve" by Joe R. Lansdale – Story about 4 teenagers who are drag racing when they run into a group of zombies in the road as, unbeknownst to them, the dead have begun to rise. Gender politics come into play, as one of the racers – the narrator – is a woman. Both the premise and gender stuff give the story an extra umph, but the characters are a bit thin and the dialogue is somewhat repetitive and annoying. 3/5

"A Dead Girl Named Sue" by Craig E. Engler – The sheriff of a small town arrests a spoiled rich kid for murder. The entire town seems to hate him. Not too much zombie action in this one – mostly focused on the tension between the rich brat and those who feel wronged by him. 3.5/5

"Fast Entry" by Jay Bonansinga – Well-written with interesting premise: A telepathic woman, haunted by her abilities and her past, is employed by the government for secret ops. She is called to Fort Denning to help figure out what has been happening as reports of random mass murder start to pour in. Her psychic ability has some rather horrific effects as she discovers the truth. Really developed lead character, with a chilling end. Strikes the perfect balance between character study and horrific action. 4.5/5

"In That Quiet Earth" by Mike Carey – A scientist grown increasingly detached and depressed since his wife's death becomes obsessed with understanding the nature of the zombie outbreak. He desires to actually become like the living dead himself, without losing his conscious awareness. The tone is tender and lyrical, a somewhat romantic (in both senses of the word) take on zombies. I didn't think that would work, but it does. 4/10

"Jimmy Jay Baxter's Last Best Day on Earth" John Skipp – Jimmy Jay Baxter tells how he exploits the zombie apocalypse to take advantage of his God-given right to shoot guns and cleanse the Earth of the scum that have infested it. A tongue-in-cheek satire of the radical-right ultra-macho sexist, racist, homophobic, xenophobic types who have gotten so much voice lately in the "alt-right" movement. We're meant to love-to-hate Jimmy Jay. An amusing romp that relies more on comedy and political commentary than horror. 3.5/5

"John Doe" by George A. Romero – Set in San Diego, California, and in present-day rather than 1968 as other stories seem to be, the story focuses on the attempts of a medical examiner and his assistant to determine the cause of death of a homeless man caught in the crossfire of Mexican immigrant smugglers and police. Much of the story focuses on the politics of bureaucracy and tensions between the M.E. and police. It also explores a recurring nightmare and the fates of others who fall apart as they try to piece together the M.E.'s report. Intriguing character interplay and a rather creepy ending that plays on the assistant's nightmare, it is a bit uneven in switching between so many people and topics. 4/10

"Mercy Kill" by Ryan Brown – One of the least enjoyable and believable stories. Told in first-person, the narrator is a Vietnam vet who races to save his girlfriend – apparently his return from war unfortunately for him coincides with the zombie apocalypse. Things get complicated as his rival, leading a posse of stereotypical redneck zombie killers, makes things difficult for him. The characters are caricatures, the tone one of juvenile machismo action rather than horror. 2/10

"Orbital Decay" by David Wellington – Told almost completely in dialogue, in the form of radio transmissions between the International Space Station and Mission Control in Houston, reading like a play without stage directions, as both deal with the zombie outbreak. Yes, zombies...in space! Obviously, the premise necessitates this story to be set in present day rather than 1968, much as Romero's story does. It's inventive, and some moments are quite creepy – just imagine you're trying to survive in a crippled space station with low oxygen while zombies are banging on the hatch! The format imposes some limitations, and the dialogue wasn't always convincing – not what I would expect from scientists and technicians to sound like, even in a crisis. But definitely gets points for originality. 3.5/10

"Snaggletooth" by Max Brallier – One of the more intriguing and thoughtful stories, it's another first-person tale, this time of a man who makes a deal with his lover to kill her husband and make it look like an accident. Despite his cocksure nature and bravado, he finds himself more haunted by his act than he lets on, especially when the husband doesn't stay dead. Like the narrators of "Jimmy Jay Baxter's Last, Best Day on Earth" and "Mercy Kill," it's interesting that the authors explore these chauvinistic characters so intimately. The narrator of "Snaggletooth" is not as obnoxious as the others, and is more cold-blooded and selfish than bigoted, and the writing handles him in a surprisingly ambivalent and subtle way. It's also clearly set in the Pittsburgh area, with references to the Allegheny Valley and Iron City, and even features some Pittsburgh dialect. Very effective. 4.5/5

"The Burning Days" by Carrie Ryan – A small group guards themselves against the encroaching zombie threat by surrounding their cabin with a wall of fire. They scramble to figure out what to do once the fuel starts to dwindle away. The story is told from first-person point-of-view by one of the female survivors who thinks more about her desires for one of the men in the group—who has just broken up with one of the other women—than about survival. I like the conceit of protecting a perimeter with fire. The romance part seemed unnecessary, though not too obtrusive. 3.5/5

"The Day After" by John A. Russo – True to its title, Russo's story follows three parallel groups the day after the events of Night of the Living Dead: Jed and Danielle, two survivors equipped with a vehicle and guns, trying to make their way to Willard (the emergency shelter the group in Night are trying to get to); Sheriff McClelland and his group (also from Night), also making their way toward Willard; and some adults and children at a Catholic school, trying to wait out for a rescue team to get them. While not necessarily well-written, its allusions to Night are enjoyable, and it was nice to see a fairly straightforward survival tale alongside the more experimental and psychological works here. 3.5/5

"The Girl on the Table" by Isaac Marion – Interesting retelling of Night of the Living Dead through the eyes of the Coopers' daughter, Karen. Most of the story takes place before the events of the film, describing the outbreak and the attack in which she gets bitten, and ends more or less with the ending of the film. Although told in third person, the narration describes Karen's thoughts as they devolve into the primal cannibalistic impulses of the living dead. It's more psychological than plot-driven, and its imagery is even poetic in at times. 4.5/5

"Williamson's Folly" by David J. Schow – Tells the story of Williamson, a small town where the satellite is supposed to have crashed that was speculated to be the cause for the zombie outbreak in Night. It explores how the military presence and outbreak affects the town. One of the longer stories, and a bit too fragmented for my liking. It covers too many characters and events to give the reader a solid anchor. I guess that's a natural result of a story like this that covers an entire town, but this aspect made it less interesting to me. The descriptions of the zombies and killings are effective though, and there is an especially creepy moment involving a stillborn baby coming back to life. 3/5

"You Can Stay All Day" by Mira Grant – This story is set in a zoo and follows a zookeeper as she deals with the zombie outbreak gradually overtaking the zoo. I appreciated the unusual setting and the unusual personality of the protagonist, who sympathizes more with animals than she does humans. Zombie tales rarely ever address what happens to animals or zoos during the zombie apocalypse, so I liked that this one filled in that gap. 4/5

"Pages from a Notebook Found Inside a House in the Woods" by Brian Keene – A group of bank robbers seek refuge from zombies inside a house that turns out to be haunted by a malevolent ghost. A great twist—trapped by the dead outside, threatened by the dead inside—but the execution was not as compelling as it could have been, perhaps because of the somewhat dull characters. This is disappointing since Keene is one of the most famous horror writers in here. Not a bad story, just didn't make as much out of its premise as I thought it could have. 3.5/5

"Dead Run" by Chuck Wendig – Two brothers have completely different takes on how to deal with the zombie outbreak: one wants to find other people and band together, the other thinks that holding up in their own house is the best chance for survival. A decent character-driven story. 3/5

"Lone Gunman" by Jonathan Maberry – Another character-driven story about a soldier who is trapped under a pile of zombie bodies, most of them permanently dead, some of them still moving. The premise sounds limiting, but it's also a creepy situation, and Maberry does a good job of giving enough interesting psychological and physical details about what the soldier is going through to make it enjoyable. 3.5/5

"Live and On the Scene" by Keith R. A. DeCandido – A narcissistic reporter tries to maintain his broadcast respectability while covering the zombie outbreak and dealing with his parents. This story tries to do that common horror move of making a protagonist who is unlikable yet sympathetic. In this case, the reporter tries to hide his Jewish background, fearing that anti-Semitic prejudice will ruin his popularity. It doesn't work too well in this story, mostly because the characters are too thinly developed, but it adds an interesting layer. 3/5

"Deadliner" by Neal and Brendan Shusterman – In the final tale, society has regained a semblance of order over the zombie threat, though there is a sense that things aren't quite back to normal. A circus owner sees the zombies as an opportunity to bring larger crowds than ever. Although fairly well-written, with an original take on the zombie phenomenon (although it also made me think of Bub in *Day of the Dead*), the end is rather predictable. Not a bad way to end the anthology, although it would have made more sense to end with something that closed with more of an emotional punch. 3.5/5

Marvin says

Filmmaker George A. Romero passed away on July 16th, 2017. To many people he was just another horror movie director but his influence in pop culture is much more than that. He transformed how we saw a specific concept and embedded it permanently into our collective consciousness. To compare, Romero was to zombies what Bram Stoker was to vampires and we will never go back to our old perceptions again. Before Romero, a zombie was depicted as a person who was controlled by another person, usually a sorcerer or shaman. In many cases, the person wasn't even dead but one who lost all control of his mind and body to another. It wasn't the zombie we were scared of but the idea of the person who could make us into a zombie. Romero's seminal film *Night of the Living Dead* changed all that. The writer and director hated the term

“Zombie” for his creation. He called them ghouls, the dead rising to eat human flesh. But the term stuck and we never saw zombies in any other way after 1968. An entirely new spectrum enters our reality. It takes a genius to manage that and in this small part of pop culture, Romero was a genius. It is hard to overestimate the influence that *Night of the Living Dead* made on film and literature especially those who soaked in anything remotely related to horror.

The director’s new take on the zombie mythology wasn’t just in film. John Skipp and Craig Spector edited a seminal anthology called *Book of the Dead* which speculated through the minds of numerous authors what happened after that apocalyptic night. Through the decades and more recently, writers such as Brian Keene, Joe McKinney, and Robert Kirkman of *Walking Dead* fame added variations but still stayed in the path of Romero’s ghoulish flesh eaters. Even literary figures with a big “L” like Joyce Carol Oates and Colin Whitehead offered their contributions. There was no going back

The anthology *Nights of the Living Dead* was one of George Romero’s last projects and was edited in collaboration with Joe Maberry, himself no slouch when it comes to zombies and the post-apocalypse. It is a fitting note to Romero’s career as it returns full circle to that one night in Pennsylvania when the dead started walking the earth and devouring flesh. It is comprised of 19 original short stories taking place on that same night and, for some stories, the next few days. The editor kept the authors in that framework with only a little poetic license mainly related to possible explanation of the events and some bending of the exact era (1968 or more recent?) The writers range from the stalwarts in the sub-genre like Brian Keene and Joe R. Lansdale to lesser known but still immensely talented newcomers like Mira Grant and David Wellington. It even has two stories by George Romero and his co-writer for *Night of the Living Dead*, John Russo. There is the usual unevenness in an anthology like this but all the tales are quite good and none really miss the mark. Ironically it is the two stories by Romero and Russo that seem slightly out of place and a bit old fashioned. But the rest of the crew seem happy to stick to the formula yet give it a kick in the rear.

Of the more established names, Joe R. Lansdale comes through in the first tale which starts with a car race on the street and develops into a race for their lives. John Skipp’s “Jimmy Ray Baxter’s Last Best Day on Earth” is about a sociopathic man who sees the apocalypse as a slice of his type of heaven. Chuck Wendig’s “Dead Run” turns the night into an examination of two brothers’ dysfunctional bond. Jonathan Maberry’s “Lone Gunman” is a harrowing story of survival. Of the newer writers, at least newer to me, there were quite a few impressive gems. In “A Dead Girl Named Sue” by Craig E. Engler, a local sheriff finds meaning in the disaster through an act of retribution. Mike Carey’s “In That Quiet Earth” find a theme in the plot that is as moving and unique as you can expect from the one who wrote *The Girl with All the Gifts*. Finally, “Mercy Kill” by Ryan Brown has a distinct Crime Noir feel to its telling.

I’m not going to capsule all 19 stories except to say each one of them gives their own individualistic lean to the basic premise that terrified so many viewers of *Night of the Living Dead*. The anthology works as a theme collection but may also be the best multiple author collections of this year. For that and as a tribute to George A. Romero, it deserving of every single star of a five star rating and plenty more.

Edward A. Taylor says

Fantastic stories and an awesome set of authors. Loved Keith R. A. Candido's tale the best, had all the things I was looking for in a zombie tale. Bravo to all!

Karl says

What sold me on this anthology were the new Joe R. Lansdale and Brian Keene stories.

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Joyce says

I confess that zombies are not among my favorite horror creatures, but this collection of excellent short stories might change your mind if you're on the fence. What I appreciated about the collection is the introduction with material about film-maker Romero and the abundance of zombies in popular culture. Stefan Rudnicki introduces the collection and reads several stories, and his dark, often menacing, voice perfectly sets the tone in the beginning and in each story. Some authors read their own work and are surprisingly good. For zombie fans and those interested in pop culture, this makes a good suggestion.

Mac says

I listened to the audiobook and, gosh, the cast was great.

Jay Smith says

As editor Jonathan Maberry points out in his introduction to the new anthology, *Nights of the Living Dead* (St. Martin's Griffin; Trade; ISBN 1250112249), George A Romero's groundbreaking 1968 film was a shock to people who had never seen anything quite like the unnamed monsters laying siege to an Evans City farmhouse. These creatures would go on to be called Zombies (Romero called them Ghouls) and start a trend that saturates media to this day. Books on the folklore and psychology of the living dead are everywhere. The monster fascinates us. Our culture revels in the "What if..?" of finding ourselves in the middle of such an outbreak.

Like any monster, however, over-exposure tends to diminish their fear factor. We all know by now that zombies are (or should be) slow and can be put down with a shot to the head (unless they are the Russo zombies from the *Return* series or... wait, I digress) and if we're fans of the genre, we've already planned our escape and worked out our home defense strategy. Brilliant storytellers have taken the genre into new realms of possibility, putting us in every possible peril against the zombie menace.

The story of our survival drives the narrative. People, usually, are the focus of the zombie story, not the monsters (I know there are exceptions). When zombie movies and stories fail, it is because they rely on the gore of the monsters and the gruesome kills to drive interest, reducing the cast of living characters to a one-dimensional menu of inevitable victims. Even when the narrative POV is the zombie itself, there is an emotional arc as we find in *Dead of Night* (by Maberry) and *Warm Bodies* by NsOTLD contributor Isaac Marion.

With so many stories and takes on the monster and the genre, it is difficult to make zombies terrifying and fresh (so to speak) in the way they seemed so long ago when NOTLD bowed in theaters.

This anthology, I am thrilled to write, succeeds. Maberry has assembled an all-star team of genre veterans and horror masters, each presenting a master class to writers and literary nerds like me in how to tell a truly frightening tale. Even if you read or write a lot of zombie fiction as I do, this collection will give you chills.

As a longtime reader in the genre, producer of a zombie horror audio series, and fan of both Maberry's fiction and Romero's movies, I was thrilled to learn that this collection would be set, specifically in the world of Romero's films. It's also a bit strange to consider the specificity of that world because the films span four decades, set in the "modern day", but treated as direct sequels pretending the previous film took place shortly before or concurrent to the first. However, this provides authors more room to play in Romero's universe (or multiverse, however you want to see it.)

It is a thrill to look back at those original characters and situations from different perspectives as we do with "The Girl on the Table" by Marion and "The Day After" by John A. Russo. But it is also exciting to move to other locations and encounter different characters dealing with their end of the world propositions.

These stories reflect many of the reasons why people fear zombie stories. Our fear transcends the horrible notion of being eaten alive or becoming a flesh-craving monster. Zombies represent our deeper dread about change in our lives, our relationships, our health, our world, and that ultimate change at our personal end of days – death. In this way, zombies are very real because one day we will all look up and see the world has changed irrevocably, turned ugly and hostile and we fight the rest of our lives to avoid being consumed or absorbed into its ranks. That's a feeling that applies regardless of if you're young and resisting the call of adulthood conformity or an adult resisting the onset of physical and intellectual obsolescence. One of the

best of these stories is Keith R.A. DeCandido's "Live and on the Scene" which offers both the media's witness account of the initial spread of the dead and a simple, yet heart-breaking tale about death, family, heritage, and loyalty.

These stories are about how we struggle to survive while preserving bits of the world that is dying. They also speak to how we cope with death and change. Zombies, themselves, are a rather dull adversary. *Nights of the Living Dead* recognizes this and drives conflict through realistic, intriguing character stories. Introspective stories like "Fast Entry" by Jay Bonansinga and broader ensemble tales like "Williamson's Folly" by David J Schow rely on fascinating, different, and well-rendered characters orbiting a personal or interpersonal conflict while making the best use of the Romero mythos.

Each story approaches the Romero brand of zombie monster (not to be confused with the John A. Russo spin-off series which uses different rules) and weaves it into the author's own brand of horror with generally breathtaking results. Stories range from the full-throttle bad-ass Texas horror of Joe R. Lansdale's "Dead Man's Curve" to the Byronesque poetry of Mike Carey's tale "In that Quiet Earth." Between there are fresh and inventive tales of madness, intrigue, and adventure that rarely stray into the familiar tropes or overdo the familiar pattern of survival horror tales.

We are not, I'm pleased to say, stuck moving from one fortress to another engaging in the interpersonal intrigue while the monsters close in. So many zombie short stories start with running and end up somewhere the characters can engage in some tired tale of revenge or madness. Carrie Ryan's "The Burning Days" comes close to this, but the setting is handled in an inventive way.

This brings me to my only, significant disappointment with the collection because it uses that trope poorly and has other issues:

If there is any story that feels out of place it is Russo's "The Day After" which is an adaptation of a screenplay excerpt co-written by Romero continuing the events of the original film into the direct sequel. It is, to me, the weakest entry of the lot. While an interesting extension of the original tale, it reads like a script summary, often in passive voice, and devoid of any of the passion or tension that is consistent throughout the rest of the stories. It has the feeling of a story stuck in an early draft, an artifact from a late author's estate with a commentary on the greatness to which it aspired but would never be realized. That is the only excuse I can think of to present such a tale among so many great entries. Of course, Russo was there at the beginning and he is royalty in the Kingdom of the Zombies so I understand why he appears in the anthology.

Having read both the book and listened to the audio, I have a profound respect for the quality of the work performed and produced by Skyboat Media. The voice talent is excellent and the production values – particularly in the fullcast-style digital-epistolary tale "Orbital Decay" by David Wellington – are outstanding. I highly recommend buying the book AND downloading the unabridged audio.

Nannette says

Nights of the Living Dead was an enjoyable anthology. George A. Romero contributed only one story but his influence is apparent in every story. This was a nice anthology and very even. The good stories greatly outnumbered the meh stories. I have included my thoughts on a few of the stories including the two introductions. The introduction by Romero is almost a class in cinema history, just incredible to listen to.

Night of the Living Dead: An Introduction by George A. Romero

Wonderful history of the zombie genre by its godfather and he prefers “ghoul” to “zombie” but gave up arguing the point years ago.

Reflections of a Weird Little Kid in a Condemned Movie House: An Introduction by Jonathan Maberry
This was fun to listen to. Imagine growing up to collaborate with your childhood hero. Wow.

Dead Man’s Curve by Joe R. Lansdale
A great opening to the anthology. A Wonderful female protagonist and unpredictable but satisfying story.

In That Quiet Earth by Mike Carey
An incredible love story. The lengths a man goes to in order to spend eternity with his beloved wife.
Touching, poetic and, ironically, life affirming.

Jimmy Jay Baxter’s Last, Best Day on Earth by John Skipp
This was disturbing on many levels. The main character is one of the most detestable individuals I have ever encountered in literature. I really did not enjoy this story because I was so repulsed by it.

The Burning Days by Carrie Ryan
A cabin in the woods. Two couples and two single friends. A planned vacation that skids to a halt when the dead show up uninvited. Who survives and more importantly whose relationships survive?

The Day After by John A. Russo
The immediate aftermath of the dead uprising has monsters who are very much alive.

The Girl on the Table by Isaac Marion
The zombie apocalypse through the eyes of a young teen girl who has been bitten. It is very complex and excellent writing.

Williamson’s Folly by David J. Schow
“Fidget-pickle” what an incredible word! I have no idea what it means (neither does Google) but there is a character in this story described as a fidget-pickle (I guess it is a hyphenated word).

You Can Stay All Day by Mira Grant
A fun day at the zoo? Not so much.

Pages from a Notebook Found Inside a House in the Woods by Brian Keene
In rural Central Pennsylvania, a group of robbers knocks off a Comic-Con. As they escape the robbery scene they run out of gas and luck. Out of gas and finding their first zombie, they flee into the woods. They find a cabin and make themselves secure. What happens when you are safe from the zombies outside but not the vengeful ghost inside?

Lone Gunman by Jonathan Maberry
“Mostly dead but not entirely” starts with a soldier waking up under a pile of large pile of dead. He must find his sanity and his purpose before he can survive.

Live and On the Scene by Keith R. A. DeCandido
This one starts like a real newscast. Harvey, the on the spot TV reporter, is reporting on a rash of multiple murders in the rural areas outside of Pittsburgh. Witness report seeing strangely acting people which police immediately discount as hysteria. The story alternates between the newscasts and reporter’s life as the events

happen. It reminded me of Orson Well's War of the Worlds broadcast.

Other stories included:

Deadliner by Neal and Brendan Shusterman

A Dead Girl Named Sue by Craig E. Engler

Fast Entry by Jay Bonansinga

John Doe by George A. Romero

Mercy Kill by Ryan Brown

Orbital Decay by David Wellington

Snaggletooth by Max Brallier

Dead Run by Chuck Wendig

My two favorite stories were In That Quiet Earth and Pages from a Notebook Found Inside a House in the Woods. What the two stories had in common, besides zombies, was an unexpected conclusion that left me very pleased, both as an adult and as the 7-year-old who loved Christopher Lee as Dracula. These two stories are horror gold for fans of all ages.

The narration by Ray Porter, Stefan Rudnicki, Jonathan Maberry, Kasey Lansdale, Kristoffer Tabori, Rex Linn, Gabrielle de Cuir, Adenrele Ojo, Richard Gilliland, and Nicholas Guy Smith (as listed on the Audible description) was first rate. All of the stories, even the ones that did not especially set me on fire, were still narrated well.

If you love zombies (it is cool to admit to loving zombies in the new millennium) and if you have a fondness for the history of the genre, treat yourself to this wonderful audiobook anthology. Let me know which stories you like the best. Enjoy and remember aim for the head.

I received this book from Audiobook Reviewer in exchange for an honest review.

<https://audiobookreviewer.com/reviews...>

Paul Ataua says

A fairly mixed bag of well written stories that explore many new angles of the zombie genre. I enjoyed reading this collection but felt the stories were, for the most part, more cerebral than visceral and that meant I was constantly imagining the action like a director realizing a movie rather than a participant living the terror. Curiously interesting, worth reading, but a finger pointing at the ghoul and not the ghoul itself.

Becky Spratford says

Review in Booklist and on blog: <http://raforall.blogspot.com/2017/06/...>

Stephanie (That's What She Read) says

4.5

I REALLY enjoyed this anthology. I liked it a lot more than I thought I would. The zombie craze had just

ended, and I thought I was done with them. I was wrong. These stories all take place in the world and setting of the Night of the Living Dead movie. I actually live near Evans City where the movie takes place, so it was so FUN to hear the names of nearby towns in the stories. I had a difficult time choosing favorites, but here they are:

A Dead Girl Named Sue by Craig E. Engler

Orbital Decay by David Wellington

Pages From a Notebook Found Inside the House by Brian Keene

Dead Run by Chuck Wendig

and Live and On Scene by Keith RA DeCandido

Scott Rhee says

I'd have to say that while some of the stories in the "Nights of the Living Dead" anthology, edited by Jonathon Maberry and George Romero, are excellent (Mike Carey's "In That Quiet Earth", John Skipp's "Jimmy Jay Baxter's Last, Best Day on Earth", George Romero's "John Doe", and David J. Schow's "Williamson's Folly"), a majority of them are mediocre at best. One or two, at most, are total stinkers, but if you love the zombie genre, don't let that stop you from reading this fun anthology.

Each story is written as an homage, a companion piece, or a direct sequel to Romero's classic 1968 film "Night of the Living Dead". Filmed on a shoe-string budget in an abandoned farmhouse in Pittsburgh, PA, Romero's film inspired an entire genre of movies, a genre that is as popular today (thanks in no small way to TV shows like "The Walking Dead" and a resurgence of international zombie films such as the South Korean "Train to Busan") as it was nearly 50 years ago.

It's worth reading if only for Maberry's introduction, a perceptive and brilliant explanation for why zombie films are so damn popular. To understand why, one must place the fascination in the context of a young horror fan seeing "Night of the Living Dead" for the first time in a small theater in 1968.

Unlike previous movie monsters such as vampires, werewolves, and mummies, Zombies (or the term Romero himself preferred, "ghouls") had no real pre-history. No movie audience had ever really seen the likes of the living dead: "The monsters were mysterious. They were enigmatic (a word I didn't know back then). That was part of what made them so damn scary. No one in the story knew what was going on, and they never found out. I couldn't remember seeing a single other movie where the entire cast of characters was clueless and, as a result, helpless because they had no information with which to form a plan. (p.xxi)"

Today, zombies are a stand-in for our cultural fears of global environmental destruction, a resurgence of old viruses brought about by an anti-science stupidity, and epidemics of new antibiotic-resistant diseases and bacteria. Zombies provide a great context and background for our cultural fascination with guns and violence. They play upon our concerns of a society still plagued with racism, white-supremacy, sexism, homophobia, anti-Semitism.

Perhaps the best reason given for why zombie films resonate so well with today's audiences comes from the mouth of a character in one of Romero's own films, "Dawn of the Dead": "They are *us*."

Bogdan says

Not a bad Anthology, but, for my tastes, there are very few stories that worth a reading.

From my point of view this is destined to be read by the fans of the genre.

Colleen says

Randomly I brought this book with me to work on Sunday, and was midway through it, when heard the news that George Romero had died. I love the original 1968 movie and recently watched a documentary about it, and while looking for more Maberry short story anthologies stumbled upon this--aka perfect. All the stories are supposed to be set in the film universe (with a note from Romero that his 2007 Diary of the Dead is considered also within that timeline)--and Maberry says he and Romero (who co-edited and contributed to the collection too) weren't too strict about the guidelines to the authors...but this would have been a far better anthology and better short stories really if the authors had adhered closer.

Some were obviously set in '68, others vague but cell phones and internet, but the zombies are all Romero style and the director's short story actually was one of my favorites in this book. He really did capture I think what makes zombie as a medium tick and take it back to the valuable roots--the transformation of zombies from magical mind control to rotting corpses shambling around in packs. I love how he looked at stuff through cultural lens with the unfolding disaster being a metaphor or making some ironic point about society--instead of just going for cheap thrills or gore (though there was always plenty of that).

There are a lot of big names in this book too--eight of the authors whose books I read last year had stories featured (Feed, Play Dead, Search and Destroy, Monster Planet, Entombed, Double Dead, The Boy on the Bridge)--while I wasn't crazy about Feed, Mira Grant's short story was one of the best. Sadly I was the most iffy about Maberry's story--which once again melds his Fall of Night/Rot & Ruin/DMS books into 1 timeline, and Romero's Night of the Living Dead farmhouse--a nice homage, but I would have liked something different personally than a retread. Also, author of Play Dead (book I couldn't stand) serves up more of the same juvenilia.

With a few exceptions, strong collection. RIP George!
